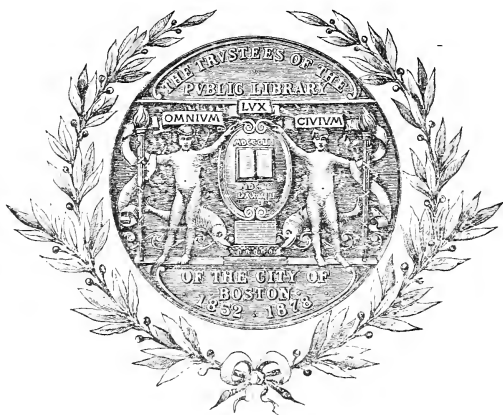


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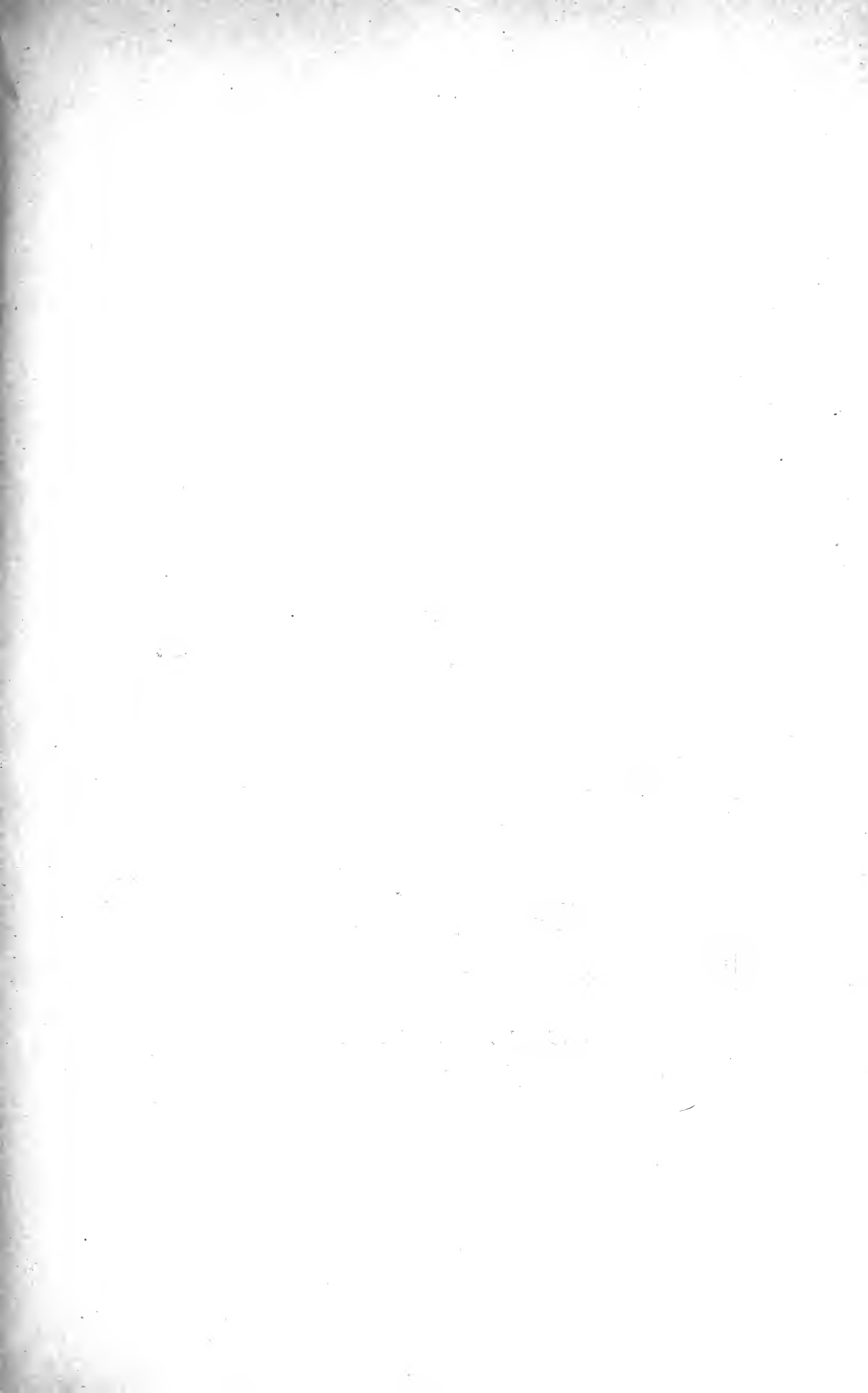


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**AMHERST AND
OUR FAMILY TREE**







COUSIN ABBA IN HER GARDEN

**AMHERST AND
OUR FAMILY TREE**

**BY
ANNE M. MEANS**

**BOSTON
PRIVATELY PRINTED
1921**

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1921

Nov 18 1921
(1921)

PRESS OF
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FOREWORD

To Miss Anne M. Means.

We, the undersigned, feeling it most desirable that the Social History of Amherst, New Hampshire, be written by the hand of one who knows and loves the place, believe that there is no person so well fitted to render a just, true and spirited account of its people as yourself.

We hereby beg that, at your convenience, you write such an account, for the benefit solely of those whose names are affixed to this petition and for such other persons as you, in your wisdom, or they in their wisdom, may consider worthy to peruse the same.

Your petitioners earnestly hope that, bearing in mind the intelligence and discretion of the select circle for whom you are to write, you will give free rein to the racy humor and perception of character for which you are so justly distinguished.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Boston, February, 1884.

ELIZA F. BIGELOW
HELEN BIGELOW MERRIMAN
MARION MCGREGOR NOYES
HELEN MCGREGOR NOYES
MARY MASON MCGREGOR
MARY MCG. DALTON
LESLIE MCG. MORISON
NANCY ELLIS MEANS
ELLA KING ADAMS
F. ADAMS
F. A. ADAMS
ANNA KENT

CHAS. THEO. CARRUTH
EDWARD P. NOYES
DANIEL P. NOYES
GEO. A. SPALDING
REBECCA A. SPALDING
JOSIAH G. DAVIS
ABBA A. DAVIS
LUCRETIA B. MYRICK
EDWARD SPALDING
DORA E. SPALDING
MARY APPLETON SPALDING
DORA N. SPALDING

To *Mrs. E. F. Bigelow,*
Mrs. Helen Bigelow Merriman,
Miss Marion McG. Noyes and others.

MY FRIENDS :

Your petition begging me to write such an account of the Social History of Amherst, New Hampshire, as I may be able has been received. Deeply sensible of the great honor you do me in supposing that I can write anything worthy of being read by such petitioners, I feel that but one course is left to me. I therefore consent to your request, only praying you in my turn to remember that it was you and not I who thought my pen equal to such a privilege. That you did so will—until I fail—be a proud and happy thought.

ANNE M. MEANS.

As will be seen from the foregoing documents, much water has passed under the bridge since my dear friends thought it worth while to petition me to write this book. I was much pleased with their request; but, alas, I found so many lions in the path when I tried, as I did, to keep my word that the years slipped away. Yet if I had fulfilled my promise long ago, the book would necessarily have lacked much which I hope has added to its value as it now appears.

However that may be, I wish in these first words

to thank my dear friend and cousin for calling me up on a certain Sunday morning several years ago and telling me frankly that unless the book was written soon, no one would be alive to care; that if I could not write it, another should do it in my place; and that I should pass over my notes to that other. I did not like the suggestion, of course. I think I could have borne with calmness her calling my attention to my delinquency in the matter, for others had done that. But her reference to *another* was the shot that told. Never should the child of my heart and brain be given into other hands to be made fit to be seen! I am sure my friend will forgive me my momentary ire, as brief reflection showed me that she had right on her side in her major proposition that the book should be written at once. Therefore I thank her wholeheartedly for rousing my dormant but not dead will in the matter. But when I set about revising the notes I had made, I soon found that they were of little use, and that the book must be re-written to have any value.

Many of the older signers of the petition have passed over to the other side, but my consolation is that the book could have added little to their knowledge; nor do I think they had any idea, when they wrote their petition, of my trying to chronicle the history of our family in Amherst, but they had found interest enough in my stories of the place to wish to have them perpetuated. I used to come home from my visits in Amherst full of

stories of my experiences there. And then, if you could have seen Cousin Abba and my father as they exchanged reminiscences of the Amherst of their youth, you would realize that for those to the manner born the subject never could grow cold. Those older signers of the petition knew their Amherst and were of it; but since those days there has come into being a new generation who only know of the place and its associations through what they are told, and it is for them, especially, that I have tried to make the past live again, as it does for me, in the stories of those from whom we have sprung.

It has been a joy to write the book; but for a non-literary lady over seventy to accomplish such a work is not to do it "at once" as I fondly hoped. Yet if it repays in any way the patient friends who have so long waited for it, I shall be glad indeed. And if the younger generation who "knew not Joseph" shall perceive the value of having such sturdy, right-living and clear-thinking ancestors, the book will not have been written in vain. And so I send it forth to those whom it may concern.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND
BY
JOHN BURNET
BISHOP OF SALISBURY
IN TWO VOLUMES
THE SECOND VOLUME
LONDON
Printed by J. Streater, at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Dunstons Church-yard, near St. Dunstons Church, in the Strand.
1679.

AMHERST AND OUR FAMILY TREE

CHAPTER I THE BEGINNING

Once upon a time: these story-book words of our childhood, which like a golden key unlocked the gate leading to worlds beyond our ken, I use to open the story of Robert Means and Joshua Atherton and their children unto the third and fourth generation, for their descendants of to-day to learn, if they will, from what manner of men they have come. These two men, with their wives, came to settle in Amherst within about a year of each other. No one could have predicted at that time how closely the history of the two families would be intertwined. Joshua Atherton and his wife were of English stock, with no other racial ties, he a graduate from Harvard and a lawyer of some note; Robert Means and his wife were of Scotch-Irish descent, with no drop of English blood about them, he a weaver by trade and afterwards a merchant, she a McGregor of Scotch Presbyterian faith and practise, her father and grandfather having been ministers of Londonderry. But before I enter upon the fascinating task of telling about them, I must set the scene of my story.

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Once upon a time, then, so long ago that for the purpose of this chronicle it was pre-historic, the General Court of Massachusetts bestowed a considerable tract of land in southern New Hampshire upon certain citizens who had fought against the Indians in King Philip's War. There does not seem to have been any alacrity to take possession of the land thus granted. It was, in fact, more or less of a howling wilderness, thickly wooded and infested with many undesirable inhabitants such as bears and unfriendly Indians. We are concerned only with that town within the original grant which in 1780 was incorporated under warrant of George II as Amherst, named for General (afterward Lord) Jeffrey Amherst, who had won great renown in the Canadian wars.

The country where the town is situated is beautiful. The hills are round about it; and although they are not as majestic as the mountains of the north, they have their own charm of wide and varied views—the nearer and more distant hills, the mountains rising one above another, suggesting an infinity of beauty beyond the reach of our vision. The town itself may be less picturesque than many in the region where roads follow the streams down to a valley and climb again to the heights, and houses are set at varying levels. For the settlers of Amherst built their village on land which tradition says was once the bed of a lake—the Plain, or Amherst Plain, it has from the first been called. Yet, as you come down into it from

the hills, the spaciousness of the Plain gives the town a particularly charming aspect, and it maintains a distinctive character for loveliness, a dignity befitting its history.

Whether it was so in the beginning, or evolved its character as the years went on, the Plain has been the centre of the town life. It is about half a mile in length, and that part of it which broadens out toward the old cemetery and the town hall is Amherst Common. "Amherst Common in my boyhood," writes Edward Boylston in his reminiscences of the town, "was not the Amherst Common of to-day. It was originally set off for, and in the early town plans and records is designated as the 'Training Field,' and well did it fill its appointed end." The region about Amherst developed into a great grazing country, and Mr. Boylston also tells us that "The residents on Amherst Plain of to-day have no adequate idea of the scenes which were witnessed here three score and ten years ago. Occasionally in spring and autumn, a drove of a hundred or two of cattle are seen crossing it, seeking or returning from the green hillsides at the north. But then, not a single hundred, but oft a thousand fat cattle in a day, and as many fat sheep, were seen to pass here, wending their way to the famous Brighton market; and this day after day, through every week in the year. This afforded fine sport for the boys, and some benefit, for every lad had his whip, and was on the lookout for their coming, ready to aid in hurrying down to French's

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or Rhodes's and always returning with a few coppers in his pocket."

To-day as we drive into the town from the railway station, we begin to recognize the houses connected with our family history. First, as we draw near the Plain, there is Joshua Atherton's weather-beaten old house, with long sloping roof, and the little hipped-roof annex that was his law office. It is set with the side close to the road, and from the front there is still a pleasant peaceful outlook across green fields and meadows. A little farther on there is a fork in the road, and, turning there to the right, we soon pass the spot where the house of Joshua's only son, Charles Humphrey, used to stand. I have been told that it was the finest house in town, but before my day it had been destroyed by fire. Next, on the right, there is the large frame house where my grandparents, David McGregor and Catharine Atherton Means, reared their family of nine children; and opposite, on the corner as we turn into the Plain, is the fine old house built by Robert Means the first. The Spalding homestead, which has so much to do with our story and about which cluster my most precious memories of Amherst, might be called the western boundary of the Plain: for there the various roads converge to form the highway to Milford, which immediately after passing the Spalding garden begins to mount a hill. The inhabitants of Amherst must always have had a passion for building roads, for they run to all points of the compass and form

a network around the town in every direction. Mr. Davis used to say that however reluctant the townsmen were to vote money for other purposes, there never was any difficulty in getting them to vote for a new road.

In these days the world is so full of absorbing interest that to many of us the story of our ancestors may seem too remote and trivial to engage our attention. What does it matter how our grandfathers and grandmothers, or their mothers and fathers, moved and had their being? They had their little day, did good or evil work in it, and their day is ended. The world was smaller then, and the stage was set with humbler scenes. The Revolution, considered as a war, was insignificant compared with the great conflict of our day, yet its results can hardly be magnified, and when we visit the battlefields of Concord and Lexington, if we have a spark of historical imagination, we cannot escape a thrill of pride in the small beginnings of a nation founded on that liberty which rests on righteousness. The war that broke out in those peaceful New England towns was, like the Great War, a war of principle, although then it was only for ourselves we fought and now it has been for all the world; but as the size of the seed bears no visible relation to the immensity of the tree, so the World War may have no greater effect on the destinies of mankind than did our little war of a hundred and fifty years ago.

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It was during the period of unrest preceding the Revolution, when the bitter resentment of the colonies at the injustice of the mother country was all but universal, that Joshua Atherton and Robert Means came to settle in Amherst, which had already become an important town. The first to come, in the spring of 1773, was Atherton, the young lawyer, with his wife and child. He was then thirty-six years of age, she twenty-four, and they had been married eight years. It was but little more than a year later that Robert Means brought his young wife there, and the children of the two families grew up in close intimacy and friendship. The son of one married the daughter of the other, and again, in more than one generation, their descendants married until the families became so linked by ties of blood as well as of friendship that to-day one may be puzzled to tell which of our relations are on the Atherton side, and which the Means.

CHAPTER II

JOSHUA ATHERTON

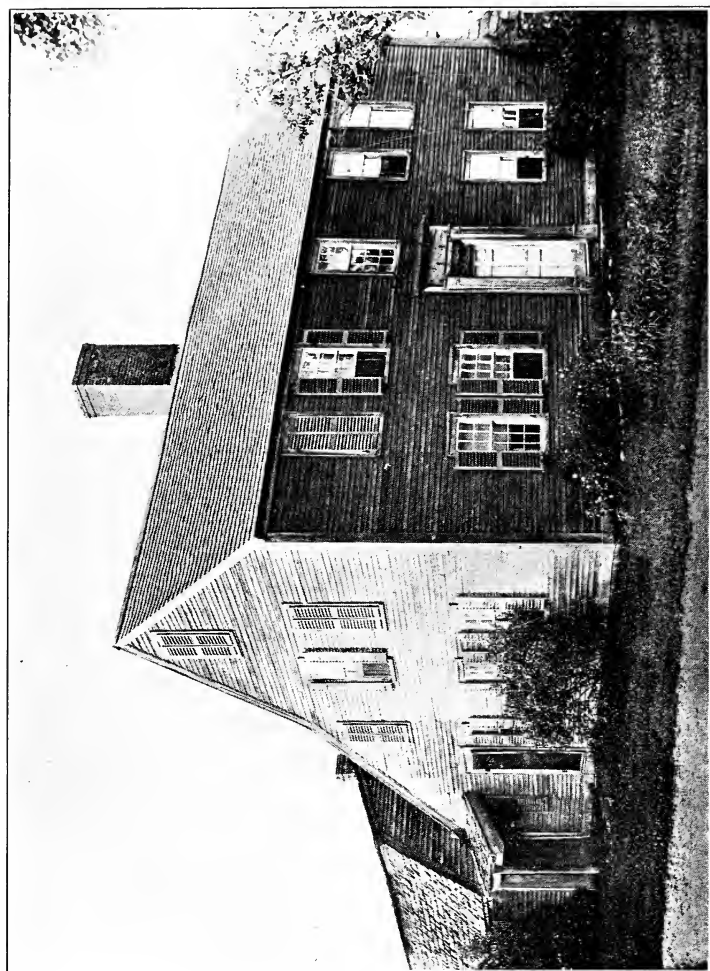
Joshua Atherton was born June 20, 1737, in that part of Harvard, Massachusetts, called Still River. He was the son of Peter Atherton and Experience Wright, his wife, who came from Andover. Peter, as was the custom of the day, had a trade. He was a blacksmith, and also a man of some little note: a magistrate, a colonel of militia, and for some years a member of the General Court. Peter was a son of Joshua, who was a son of James, who came to this country from England sometime prior to 1650, and was probably a relative of General Humphrey Atherton. Our knowledge of the first Joshua and James is rather vague; but Peter the blacksmith is a quite definite person, and his tombstone in the Harvard churchyard bears this record: "Peter Atherton, Esquire, closed the scene of life in Concord during the sitting of the General Court of which he was a member, the thirteenth of June, seventeen sixty-four, in the sixtieth year of his age. Experience, the partner of his life, closed the scene the fourteenth of November, seventeen seventy-five, in the sixty-fourth year of her age. One solitary mansion encloses their remains. Companions in life, they have the consolation of not being separated in death, if, indeed, consolation be found in the grave. This monu-

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ment is erected to their memory which will ever be dear to the sons and daughters of virtue and religion."

It was intended that Joshua should follow his father's trade, but after a severe illness he was not considered sufficiently robust for such an occupation, and after due preparation he was sent to Harvard College, from which he was graduated in 1762. After his graduation he studied law, and in 1765 he was admitted to the bar in Worcester County. In November of that year, when he was twenty-eight and she only sixteen, he married Abigail, daughter of the Reverend Thomas Goss of Bolton. It was said that she had been one of his pupils. He had practised his profession successfully in several towns before settling in Amherst; and the controlling inducement to his making that move was his appointment to the office of Register of Probate for the new County of Hillsborough of which Amherst was then the shire town. There he bought of Major Robert Read a farm and dwelling-house, which was his home for the rest of his life. This house is still standing, a short distance from the village on the road to the railway station of Ponemah, which used to be known as Amherst, and earlier, when I first went to Amherst, as Danforth's Corner, named for David Danforth, who was a contemporary of Joshua Atherton. Ponemah was the Indian name of all this region.

Mr. Atherton's son, Charles, in a brief memoir of his father, tells us of the promise of the new



THE JOSIUA ATHERTON HOUSE

settlement, and of the troubles that were to follow: "His professional popularity increased. Affluence seemed within his reach. His farm was paid for. Improvements in his real estate and buildings were surrounding him with comforts. His heart was filled with the generous aspirations of a young man who felt the advantages which his talents and education gave him, who honored his profession, and loved his king, to whom he had sworn allegiance, and the country where were the graves of his ancestors. But this prospect, so fraught with hope and encouragement, was soon to be most sadly reversed. The controversy between the colonies and the mother country increased in exasperation and bitterness, and Mr. Atherton, most unfortunately for himself and family, was an open and firm loyalist. He was utterly opposed to all those measures the tendency of which was to bring the controversy to the trial of arms, for in that trial his convictions were, the colonies must fail, that success would continue to follow the British arms, and that we should be subjugated provinces, at the mercy of an exasperated and jealous victor. Not insensible to the wrongs inflicted upon us by the mother country, he thought a war with her would be fatal to the liberties which we claimed and to which we were entitled."

Joshua Atherton was a Tory, a Loyalist; but in the troubled years that preceded the Revolution, we may be sure that his keen and just mind gauged rightly the wrongs under which the colonies were

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suffering. He could not, however, believe those grievances should be redressed by war. "I think," writes his son, "he may be pardoned for flattering himself that the sympathy for the rights of the colonies which manifested itself in various parts of England and particularly in London would soon spread over the whole nation and produce a change in a corrupt and perverse administration and establish a ministry favorable to our just and reasonable demands." His reasons may not seem very convincing to us; but doubtless there was some justification for his view, and perhaps that is the best excuse we can find for him. Certainly we can admire his undaunted courage and persistent pluck in holding to the cause of the king so long as he believed that to be best for the interests of this country. His opinions, naturally, made the prosperous young lawyer unpopular with the Whigs; but it is interesting to note that the petty persecution to which he was subjected had its source in other towns than Amherst. In September, 1774, for instance, some citizens of Bedford, among others, came to "visit" Mr. Atherton. They summoned him to the court house to sign a paper, and the conference seems to have broken up amicably when he invited them to drink at Mr. Hildreth's. Parties from the neighboring towns continued to visit him; they heaped various insults upon him; and among other wrongs deprived him of his favorite fowling-piece.

It was not, however, until the Royal Governor,

John Wentworth, leaving New Hampshire without any government whatever, had fled to the protection of the British ships-of-war at the Isles of Shoals, that Mr. Atherton's position became perilous. If it had been the French Revolution instead of the American, no doubt his head would have paid the penalty of his loyalty to the mother country; but the patriotic Americans did nothing worse than watch him and occasionally show their ill will. He was never a spy in any sense of the word and was not regarded as such; but his fellow-citizens once suspected him of harboring a spy and made a raid on his house for search. Mr. Atherton invited them in, and threw open his house for their inspection. They found nothing until they reached the garret, when some movement in a dark corner convinced them that they had run their quarry to earth. Great was their disappointment when they found only old Cato, a half-witted negro servant of Mr. Atherton, who had taken refuge there out of fright.

Early in 1777, however, Mr. Atherton was arrested, and confined in the Exeter jail; later he was removed to the Amherst jail, which just then was completed. The dates are uncertain, but he was liberated in June, 1778. Tradition tells us that his jailers were not ill-disposed toward him: at Exeter, on account of his delicate health, he had been allowed the liberty of the jail-yard; and at Amherst, although locked up during the day, he was allowed to spend the nights with his family.

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While at Exeter, he wrote to his wife a letter which, although imperfect, is the only one of the period which has come down to us, and depicts with charm the not too onerous hardships of a Loyalist's incarceration.

CITY HALL EXETER, July 3rd. 1777.

My very Dear Laurea, [Her name was Abigail.]

When I parted with you last I had very little expectation of being detained so long from my Family and my Interest; but while I flattered myself I should get out of the Hands of Scoundrels and dirty Comtee Men, and be brought before men of Candour and understanding, where I doubted not I should meet with the Justice I was intitled to; I was greatly disappointed to find myself brought before a Number of fellow Prisoners, who owed their situation to the same Injustice, that had made me a Partaker in their Misfortunes.

I would not fright you with the Descriptions of a Gaol, Indeed, I dispute my right to do it at this Time, for I can assure you with the greatest sincerity, that, if I must be deprived of the pleasure of your Company & my Family's; there is no place in this state I would so soon choose to lament that loss in, as the place of my present Confinement.

I will assure you, my Laurea, we find means to make even a Gaol agreeable. We dance, sing, play

cards, tell the Tales of Friendship to each other, *and despise our oppressors*. In a Word, the Company has turned a Gaol into a Palace, and we would not exchange our situation for that of many a Gentleman's out Doors, who has the *Weight of Government on his Sholders*. But we languish for the society and Amusements of our Families!—bū̄t console ourselves that the future enjoyment of them, will be sweetened by the present Loss when we shall exchange a Purgatory for the Elisian Fields.

I would not entertain you with so dull a story as Complaints, suspicions, Heart-Burnings, all *vehement*, no Evidence, no Justice, no Humanity, no regular Execution of Law, Multiplicity of gray Wigs without any Thing Valuable to fill them—&c, &c—&c.—all these must be omitted as too dull of an intercourse of so sincere a Friendship, and I can only assure you, I am in safe Custody, and that nothing material has hapened to me, or my Companions since you have heard from us, and that we have not been guilty of any Treasonable Plots or Conspiracies against the united States, *nor against our W-oes*. Good God! was there ever men of more Virtue and real worth: from which we cannot but. . . [Here a page is missing.] for I have only to refer you to Nancy who has paid us a most kind Visit, and can inform you of every particular—Inclose you a song I have learnt of a fellow Prisoner. Unhappy Man!

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neither he nor your devoted servant have any Body to sing it to.

There is no doubt that Joshua Atherton loved his country as much as those who had been eager to take up arms against England. He had been a Loyalist because he was convinced that war was not the remedy for the wrongs of the colonies. We must remember that, in the beginning, no one had thought of complete independence of the mother country. By 1779, however, Mr. Atherton was ready to see that independence was not only inevitable but right, and he took the oath of allegiance to the United States. He was restored to his civil rights, and re-admitted to practise at the bar. That he was also restored to the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens is plain from the fact that he was several times chosen for offices of importance and trust. Success in his profession was the natural fruit of his talents: clients came to his office for advice, and young men to study law with him—among the latter one William Gordon, who was to marry his oldest daughter Frances.

That Joshua Atherton's conformity to the new Government came from no weakness of character is evidenced by the firm stand he was willing to take against slavery. In February, 1788, he was chosen as a delegate to represent Amherst at the State Convention held at Exeter to ratify New Hampshire's adoption of the Constitution of the

United States. The Federalists were in favor of the Constitution as it stood; those in opposition were called Anti-Federalists. The chief talent of the Convention was on the side of the Federalists, and the Constitution was ratified by a vote of fifty-seven to forty-seven. Amherst had been Anti-Federalist, and had elected Mr. Atherton to voice its protest; his chief personal objection to the Constitution seems to have been its attitude in regard to slavery. There was no reporter at the Convention, and the only speech of which we have record—and that imperfect—is Mr. Atherton's, which expresses his unalterable views on the subject of slavery:

Mr. President, I cannot be of the opinion of the honorable gentleman who last spoke, that this paragraph is either so just or so inoffensive as they seem to imagine, or that the objections to it are so totally void of foundation. The idea that strikes those who are opposed to the clause so disagreeably and so forcibly is, hereby it is conceived (if we ratify the Constitution) that we become consenters to and partakers in the sin and guilt of this abominable traffic, at least for certain period, without any positive stipulation that it shall even then be brought to an end. We do not behold in it that valuable acquisition so much boasted of by the honorable member from Portsmouth, "that an end is then to be put to slavery." Congress may be as

much or more puzzled to put a stop to it then, than we are now. The clause has not secured its abolition.

We do not think ourselves under any obligation to perform works of supererogation in the reformation of mankind; we do not esteem ourselves under any necessity to go to Spain or Italy to suppress the Inquisition of those countries, or of making a journey to the Carolinas to abolish the detestable custom of enslaving the Africans; but, Sir, we will not lend the aid of our ratification to this cruel and inhuman merchandise, not even for a day. There is a great distinction in not taking a part in the most barbarous violation of the sacred laws of God and humanity, and our becoming guarantees for its exercise for a term of years. Yes, Sir, it is our full purpose to wash our hands clear of it; and however unconcerned spectators we may remain of such predatory infractions of the laws of our nature, however unfeelingly we may subscribe to the ratification of man-stealing, with all its baneful consequences, yet I cannot but believe, in justice to human nature, that if we reverse the consideration, and bring this claimed power somewhat nearer to our own doors, we shall form a more equitable opinion of its claim to our ratification.

Let us figure to ourselves a company of these man-stealers, well equipped for the enterprise, arriving on our coast. They seize or carry off the whole or part of the town of Exeter. Parents are taken and children left; or possibly they may

be so fortunate as to have a whole family taken and carried off together by these relentless robbers. What must be their feelings in the hands of their new and arbitrary masters? Dragged at once from every thing they held dear to them, stripped of every comfort of life, like beasts of prey, they are hurried on a loathsome and distressing voyage to the coast of Africa, or some other quarter of the globe where the greatest price may waft them. And here, if any thing can be added to their miseries, comes on the heart-breaking scene! A parent is sold to one, a son to another, a daughter to a third. Brother is cleft from brother, sister from sister, and parents from their darling offspring. Broken with every distress that human nature can feel, and bedewed with tears of anguish, they are dragged into the last stage of depression and slavery, never, never to behold the faces of one another again. The scene is too affecting,—I have not fortitude to pursue the subject.

That opposition to slavery was sure to create enemies at a time when every community had its slaves is shown by the fact that shortly after the Convention, when he was absent attending court, Mr. Atherton's two barns were burned by an incendiary. He lost all his winter fodder, a cider-mill, farming tools, and his four cows. His horse, fortunately, he had with him. There were no insurance companies then to make good his loss that was,

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however, in a measure repaired by contributions from some of his neighbors who were ready to prove their personal goodwill.

Mr. Atherton's previous Toryism was no bar to his being, politically, a great admirer of Washington and Hamilton. But it would seem as if he were fated, in spite of his engaging personal qualities, always to be on the unpopular side of any public question. In 1798 President John Adams appointed him a Commissioner for the County of Hillsborough to provide for the valuation of land and dwelling-houses with a view to laying and collecting direct taxes the first of which, for the United States, was a tax of two million dollars provided for by the Act of July 14, 1798. Mr. Atherton, also, had all the English prejudice against the French; he had no sympathy with the leaders of the French Revolution, and rejoiced in Washington's proclamation of neutrality, in the Jay Treaty with England in 1794, and in the Act of Congress of July 7, 1798, which dissolved our Treaties with France and declared them no longer obligatory. These Acts were all extremely unpopular in New England, particularly in New Hampshire and the County of Hillsborough, and Mr. Atherton's advocacy of them revived against him all the old jealousy and prejudices of the Revolutionary times with a bitterness and rancour more severe than in the trying crisis of the War. Thus his appointment as Commissioner to carry out the hated tax law was exceedingly unwise. However,

he discharged the duties of his office acceptably to the Governor, and he had the honor of being hanged in effigy by the town of Deering. A letter written about this time to his son-in-law, William Gordon, gives us interesting information as to his family affection, and his attitude toward public affairs:

AMHERST Jany 20. 1799.

On Friday night, between 8 & 9, a sley came up—it is Silsby, says I. I went to the door, and who but William [William Gordon, Junior] should meet me full in the arms! I fancy you would have no objection to going through such a scene—There is 9 or 10 days vacation, and he had very rightly calculated that it would not cost him more to take a ride with Silsby to Amherst, than to pay board at Exeter. He appears in fine health & spirits: tho' I fancy his tasks are full hard enough, as he complains of having had the head-ache often. It is impossible to fix these matters exactly right—as rules of schools cannot accommodate themselves to every genius or constitution, or to temporary complaints. I have ever considered that very rigid Rules were unnecessary for young persons of good minds, who had been accustomed to exercise their own judgments: And I flatter myself, that my own family are a striking example of these principles, who, used to very little restraint, do not appear to have ever needed any.

I felt a peculiar satisfaction in perusing the debates on Griswold's motion—Gallatin's Prudence and Jesuitism seems to have entirely deserted him. He has committed himself so completely, that it seems to me that he cannot easily recover his ground. He appears small enough, and wicked enough. Has almost confessed the guilty connection. He seems to be sensible of his own Error in the conclusion of his observations and to have endeavored to secure a Retreat. This I think, & hope, will be an unsurmountable Task brought on himself, contrary to his usual cunning.

The subject matter of the act in view will be difficult of due arrangement; but it is of the utmost consequence that it should be done. These combinations, of which I have no doubt he is a principal member, are of the most dangerous consequence. The Internals, if all let loose, could not do so much mischief to mankind. All the devils in Milton's paradise lost, if let loose, might lie still and leave the work of viliny, devastation and murder to the management of the Illuminati—the Jacobins, the Irish-brotherhood, the Jeffersonians and other notable reformers and their associates: nay to the *great nation* alone. God be thanked! their plan of Tyranny, murder, anarchy, plunder, Robbery, cruelty and Atheism is pretty well understood. You have no doubt read Robison's Illuminati, which, tho' not a very masterly performance, is highly instructing, as it developes the beginnings and will serve as a clue to discover all the dark caverns, and midnight

councils of the most abandoned wretches that ever disgraced human-nature. The speech of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland sent to Mr. Means, which I have just read, unfolds their more sublime mysteries, and discovers what Robison only exhibits in well founded conjecture.

The superstructure of the illuminati upon masonry, is chiefly of the jesuitical complexion. One may trace the architecture from the builders of the great jesuitical Orders. Atheism and irreligion are added. What is wanting to make the abodes of mother Terra, more dreadful than the infernal Regions. Their system is founded in the most absolute Tyranny that can be devised including unequivocally the power of life & death, while every member is by oath bound to secrecy never to disclose any one of their Villanies or murders on pain of death, whatever tribunals they may come before! Here is the sum total of hellish Wickedness! to perpetrate every crime with impunity! and all the work is to list under this blessed rule, this new illumination, the blare of which has lately escaped from Pandemonium. Too much severity cannot be used with the abettors of this sytem, either in the debates in Congress, or by the laws to be enacted.

The lists in my division are all finished, I mean as to the taking them—the Assessors have not yet met to make the valuations. The Address, the Fidelity, the Diligence, and perseverance of the Assessors in this division cannot be too much applauded. I may perhaps mention one exception:

Friend Hodgston had engaged to undertake for the town of Weare—but the Friends got an idea that it was a *war tax*, and inconsistent with their religion to give it any Aid. An Assessor was not easy to be found out of their society. There was no objection that I have heard of by any in Weare to giving their lists, if there was anybody whose conscience would permit them to take them. Two neighboring Assessors have, I understand, accomplished the business without difficulty. Notwithstanding the deep snows, the roads almost impassable, it has not arrested the progress. I intended to have made some observations on the construction of the Act, but as I find by your fav'r of the first instant, received by the last mail, that it is determined at the Treasury; I need make no remarks. Your observation that it will make very little odds, I think is just; and if we find it necessary, we can alter it.

The member of our gen'l Court from Epping played a very singular game—he seems to grasp at everything—He first made an attack upon the Treasurer, got a committee appointed to settle public accts &c with instructions craftily drawn to mortify and perplex him. The Treasurer, with proper resentment, entered and on the floor of their house exposed the design and the impropriety of submitting to such Masters. It was altered to his satisfaction.

He next attacked the present speaker, and in a most virulent and blasting piece, published in the

Concord paper, represented his Conduct in the worst light, calculated to influence. He calculated probably, that Judge L—'s age would certainly prevent his new election, and if he could put the speaker out of the way, he was the next highest in votes, & should probably be the next senator to congress. This failed. He next appeared at the head of a party which he seemed to create to endeavour to lessen the pay of the Atty. Gen'l.—said however that he had kept the Grand Jury a fortnight at Dover, and they had found but Two bills. This assertion was false. His most powerful Observation was, that there were lawyers enough who would undertake the office for a less sum, say 250 dollars, in this I suppose he spoke for himself. This jesuit attached to his party those who were apprehensive of prosecutions on the Escheat act. A gentleman, who lately lived in this town, now of Thornton, was there labouring 3 weeks to increase the apprehensions of these. Some supposed the 150 dollars given to the Commissioner of the 3 division, might well enough be taken out of his pay. Some Revolutionary sages did not feel very well disposed towards this Officer of the state. Some are always against adequate compensation to the public officers, and make it an engine of popularity to oppose grants. The debate lasted long—finally it was carried at 250\$ sent up to the senate, negatived, the old sum sent down at 324\$. A long debate took place again in the House barely carried, sent up & remains at 250\$. The Views of this

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Patriot are obvious, and I shall make no remarks.

The great body of the illuminati from the great nation and their Leader, I fancy will, or perhaps before this time, have, their Lamps of illumination put out by the Waters of the Nile, and the arabian and turkish Lamp snuffers. This must be a fatal blow to the ambition of France, and teach her at lest one lesson of moderation. But say they, the work of Reformation will go on in some-shape-another. Will it surely? nay, I think it is now too well understood to proceed much further. I think with you she must retire within her own shell.

My leg is perfectly well—and my health is tolerable. Permit me to tell you that there is no cash here—and we hope you will bring home enough for a circulating medium as congress-Men have the enormous sum of 6 dols. a day. Ay, and the Commissioners have 3 dollars a-day why they will grow rich as Jews.

Mr. Abbot who is waiting to carry our letters to the post office grows impatient—so I shall only add that Humphrey goes to Exeter latter end of this week for 'Becca, and carries William down, so he saves one dollar of his calculation, which it is evident he will save & more.

I am, Dr Sir, wholly yrs.

JOSHUA ATHERTON.

The year before his appointment as Commissioner Atherton's health had begun to fail in con-

sequence of an organic affection of the heart, which in due time enfeebled his mental as well as his bodily energy. His disease was very oppressive, and its gradual encroachment terminated his life in 1809, when he was seventy-two years of age. Charles H. Atherton, in his memoir, has given us a description of his father's appearance and character :

Mr. Atherton in stature was about five feet seven inches in height, with a heavy brow, hazel-gray eyes, and a prominent nose, broad over the shoulders and chest, with a comely expansion of body and waist. His nether limbs were rather small for the weight above them. Walking was not a favorite exercise with him. The saddle, till he grew too infirm to mount his horse, and then a chaise, was his vehicle. He was reputed not only a good-looking, but a handsome man. The last tie-wigs noticed in this county were worn by him and his friend, the Hon. Ebenezer Champney. His manners were of the old school of English gentlemen, quite different from our naked and plain republican manners. He was remarkable for his social qualities. His courtesy and urbanity will ever be remembered by those who were familiar with him. His hospitality was unbounded. The clergy, the gentlemen of the bar, the judges, officers of the Revolution, and every stranger of distinction within the reach of his invitations, were his wel-

come guests. He was a good liver, and delighted in company at his well-cooked dinners. He liked a good glass of wine, and the grace and pleasantry with which he mingled his bowl of punch and distributed it among his guests are vivid in my recollection. With all his inclination to good cheer, he was never known to indulge to excess either in eating or drinking. His rule seems to have been to spend in hospitality and good dinners all his earnings. His course of life seemed unfortunately to say, "Let us enjoy to-day, for we know not what to-morrow will bring forth."

He was a good scholar, and his literary taste was refined. As a sound lawyer and advocate, his rank was high. He had the best law library in the State, out of the town of Portsmouth. He was not ordinarily eloquent or fluent; his voice was not the best; but when his feelings were aroused and their excitement did not overcome him, he was not only eloquent, but forcible. He treated the general run of his clients with great distance, such as would not be suffered in these days. At one period of his life, he was a most successful advocate with the jury.

He was not what would be called a religious man, if an implicit belief in the tenets then most prevalent and an ostentatious profession of superior piety were necessary to gain him that appellation. But it was by his influence that the Rev. Jeremiah Barnard was settled as the minister of Amherst, March 3, 1780. His preference for Mr.

Barnard resulted from the superior liberality of his views compared with those of the other candidates. He was a member of no church, but a constant attendant on public worship. He revered the character of Jesus and the morality of his Gospel, and was a firm believer in the immortality of the soul; but to many of the articles of the religious creeds then and now generally inculcated, he never seemed able to yield his assent. He was accustomed to direct the schoolmaster and the clergyman not to teach his children the Primer catechism then universally in use.

Of Joshua Atherton's personal charm we may get a better idea from his own letters to various members of his family, several of which we are fortunate enough to have preserved for us. These letters show him happy in his marriage, a devoted husband and father, and give us more intimate knowledge of his domestic qualities than we could have in any other way. Those to his wife and daughters show the genial, lovable side of him, and his views therein expounded as to the education of his children are as interesting to-day as they were unusual in his time; while one or two letters to his son, Charles, and especially to William Gordon, his son-in-law, show the vehemence of his political opinions. These family letters give a complete and interesting picture of the man himself, and inci-

dentally of his family and of life in those far-off days in a New England village.

To His Son Charles at Harvard College.

AMHERST 2: Decem^r. 1793.

I inclose to you an Execution against Capt. Belcher (I think they call him) of Boston. This Execution in Taggart's name, but is my property. You will take the first Opportunity to wait on him & request him to pay the contents—in doing this, as in all other matters, you will remember the *suaviter in modo fortiter in re*—you will observe that it cannot be served in Mass: having been obtained here—all that can be done is, to request him to pay, if he does not, the Judgment must be sued. If he will answer it over to Mr. William Deblois for the use of George Deblois—or if he will pay it, or let you take it up on his account in goods at reasonable price—or procure goods, such as Linnens, Sugars, Cotton Wooll &c&c—or Hats in part (we each of us want a good one) but they must come soon—or if he will answer any of your College Bills—any of these ways will be acceptable. If he will do nothing return the Execution to me as soon as may be.

In my Excursion to the Westward, I saw Harry Jones. He appeared like a Rake of 37, was engaged deeply Day-&-Night at the Card Table, where the Bets were large—has left the office he was studying

in, and is become quite a Gentleman of leisure. Unhappy Youth! Nature made thee pleasant and agreeable with a pretty Fortune at command—but what art thou the better?

I saw young Emerson at Holles ordination, where for once-in-a-way I trifled away a day-or-two with the rest tolerably agreeable. What-the-duce ails you at College, that you must both make youngsters criminals and ridiculous do not you expect a long Lecture of Exhortation? I feel myself so secure, and so little interested, that I shall omit it at-present. Ah, Charles, how many shapes Folly weares!

I seem to have got some money for you almost into my hands, but it still escapes like a Phantom. Dinner is ready, where we are all going to sit down in perfect Health.

J. ATHERTON.

To the Same, Probably in 1794.

No Charles, I claim no superiority over the youngest Child I have, but what Reason will convince them. I rejoice that you feel yourself under no necessity of Advice as to the Articles of Temperance and Industry and the Duties you owe to yourself. I know nothing particular that you ever need advice in such Particulars, and am perfectly willing to think you are proof against the incessant Temptations even of a college Life.

I am greatly delighted with the manner in which you mention your Rivals. Few persons can be both *Friends and Rivals*, nor can there be a more irresistible proof of Greatness of mind than for persons to be *both*. Happy, my son, in such a Friend! you cannot esteem him too much—and be assured the part you have to act yourself, if you perform it within it's own Laws is great, the most honourable and the most exquisitely delicate!

I regret the Labour you must undergo to compose and deliver your Latin Oration, but as it is a very good part, I flatter myself you will execute it with Address. Will it not pave the way for your having the English oration at Commencement? if it should, you may be a gainer by the Bargain.

Mr. Gordon goes this morning for Cambridge—supposes he shall receive money at Boston out of which he will furnish you, if he does not you will write by him what you want, and I shall leave orders to have it sent to you—for you must know that I shall set out latter end of next week on the Circuit, and shall not have it in my power to attend to other matters.

You will ask such of your acquaintance to honour the Exhibition with their Company as you shall think proper—we are at so great a Distance while I am obliged to be at Dover, it is not probable any of the family can attend it. I would have had Gordon and Fletcher postpone their journey till that Time, but they thought they could not. My Acquaintance near Cambridge, or in it, are few.

Judge Dana, Judge Lowel, Mr. Gerry, Doctr. Spring and Mr. Bradish used to be of my particular Acquaintance, but of these Distance and the Occupations of Life, have almost deprived me. Messrs. Lowel, Doctr. Spring & Mr. Bradish, however, I have always visited when my Business called me into their neighbourhood. Doctr. Putnam also you know is of our , his wife being a near Relation. You will ask any of them you see fit in my, or your own, name—as I shall not be there it will be in vain for me to do otherwise than to leave it to you. If word could be got to Lancaster it is probable some of them would be down. I do not, however, consider this Business so material as Commencement.

Every soul of us have been very sick, but are almost recovered. Hope you have escaped these horrid Colds. Have you got your Box?

I count the days when you are to finish your studies and return, for I stand in the most extreme need of your assistance. Do you think you shall make a good, carefull, assistant, and go through the drugery of taking care of Farms, Mills, Law Business, settling old accounts, Gardening and the whole Catalogue?

I have only to add my most ardent wishes that the fifteenth of April may add new Laurels to your College Life!

J. ATHERTON.

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To His Daughter Rebecca.

AMHERST Novem'r 26, 1798.

My Dear 'Becca,

If you can imagine We are just arrived at Amherst from Exeter where we last parted from you (forgetting that it is now the 26th of the month) I would go on to tell you that we arrived safe at Dearborn's about dark, having broke the spring of the Chaise about 1 mile before we got there, which Mr. — was so good as to mend with a huge rope. The weather prevented our early-rising next morning, for it snowed briskly, & about noon we found ourselves safe arrived at Prentice's as there was no probability of our getting to Amherst that Day, we could do no less than stay at Londonderry till next morning. Here I found myself much at Ease, as I had now made it certain there would be no Court at Haverhill, Judge Prentice had sworn by all his gods, & some more, that he would not go, Farrar was sick and there was an end of the court. I confess, I felt no small satisfaction, that I had escaped so fatiguing a Journey—nor was it my Business to enquire what Mr. Prentice's motives were. I regretted it, however, that I had been obliged to leave Exeter, just as objects had become familiarised, and when the agreeable Company could not have failed to fill the vacant Hours with delight.

The next day we found ourselves at Home sur-

rounded with the smiles of Health which have not yet forgotten to visit us.

I had not been at Home but a few days before the business that called me to Exeter put me upon Journeying, which has continued ever since till last Thursday, when I had the pleasure of travelling through snow banks high as my horse's back, from Lyndeboro' to Amherst. Do not think I was out in all the storm, for I kept myself safely housed at Gould's (Lyndeboro') from Monday noon till Thursday morning. Such a storm of wind and snow I never beheld. I have made such great proficiency in the art of driving through the snow, that I have thoughts of setting out to make a passage to Exeter, that Mr. & Mrs. Smith and my dear 'Becca may come to Amherst, but if I should fail, I hope somebody else, will perform that service—poor Silsby, came swetting along friday night, so fatigued that even *his* philosophy began to reel. Well done! in comes Mrs. shepard (Fanny) Miss Peggy Barker, Miss Snow, and Mrs. Whiting to spend the Even'g. Mr. Whiting joins the Company—&c, &c.

The apples and the Nuts are eaten—the Evening has been agreeable, and the Company are retired—as we are about to—to bed.

It is a fine morning!

I got up this morning by day-light to take a dose of Rhubarb Jalap and salt of wormwood, at the recommendation of Doct'r Atherton, *to cure my leg*, which has already got well, so I presume the

physic will answer a good purpose as the cure is certainly performed. it is now 3 in the after-noon and the imployment usual on such occasions is over, and my pen begins to go: But what shall I say, my good girl, shall I tell you that I am about to ask after you several Times in a day? I have been at Home so little, I have not got reconciled to the vacant seat. Shall I give you parental advice? It is very difficult to lay down Rules that can be of any service—a good heart and a good degree of knowledge are the best Rules—I know you have the former, and I flatter myself, not destitute of the Latter. Circumstances are so various, to be tied to a set of precise Rules is more embarrassing than the Circumstances themselves—but were I to be indulged with one, I would say *never do what your heart disapproves*.

You will take particular care of your health; all enjoyment vanishes like a shadow, like a Tale that is told, where health is no more a Visitant: all the gay Parties of the most brilliant Court are not to be compared to her—she is the Gallant of Pleasure and the Brides-groom of Happiness—all nature smiles around her, and she is indebted to none for her exquisite enjoyments: the fragrance of the field is not to be compared to her breath—she gives life and immortality to all around her. Chearfulness and early-rising perhaps contribute more to this all-chearing Companion, than all the Prescriptions of the sage physician—bless me! what recommend it to a lady, to rise early! no, it is enough for the

gentlemen to rise early and make a good fire for them—true, true, well then, let them cultivate cheerfulness—this is delightful! Health is her sure companion.

Is the Meetinghouse yet dedicated? I have forgotten the day appointed—but think it was about this Time. You doubtless will have a *brilliant* sermon made to a *brilliant* assembly in an *Elegant* house adorned with *Elegant* Ladies—but I think the solemnity of these occasions does not admit of a ball to close the scene.

Did you see Judge Patterson? He did not, I suppose, like a former Judge, come into the New-england states to get a Wife.

You made but a short visit at Portsmouth—presume it was an agreeable one—who did you see there? I think Mr. Adams was disappointed at your not tarrying longer—but I do not see how you could leave Mrs. Smith very long. Her goodness merits all your attention.

What an excellent man the Governor is! His Lady is all goodness—I am charmed with the ease and politeness of their manners. If any proper opportunity presents, let them receive my most unreserved Respects.

Mr. & Mrs. Peabody and their lovely Daughter, have engaged my whole heart—present them my best regards. If opportunity presents, you will not forget my compl'ts to Mr. & Mrs. Abbot, Doct'r Tenney and Lady—Mr. J. Smith Gilman & Lady—Mrs. Swett & sister. I shall write to Mr. Nat Gil-

man on business. I fear the sleighing will fail, and that the visit to Amherst & Peterboro will be delayed longer than we expected—be that as it may, to hear you enjoy your Health, and spend the fleeting Hours agreeably will be an inexpressible satisfaction to your Pa :

J. ATHERTON.

To His Wife.

PORTSMOUTH Feby. 12th. 1799.

I am, my Dear Girl, now seated by a good fire at George Massey's the place where the Court put up—it is the best place I ever put up at abroad—but I fear I shall not be able to keep it, as they have not a spare bed for more than the Court, and I go a-night to my old friend Hardy's for a bed, it is close by,—here I am accommodated with a good Chamber and an excellent bed, taking my meals at Massey's. The day I left Home, I reached Thom's at Londonderry—the air was extreme bad, and of course, the Journeying very disagreeable. The next day it was ten-times worse, the road was blown up so that it could not be found great part of the way, and the wind blew such a storm of snow about my Ears, that I was no better on it than in the worst real storms. However, I crawled on sometimes plunged all over in the snow, sometimes riding safe on the old path where it could be found. At very late dinner Time I got to Hook's, ordered my Horse

up, and stayed till morning—I called on Becca entering Exeter & dined with Mr. Smith—Becca is in fine Health and says she will go home whenever it is convenient to send for her. You will therefore send the first opportunity. Abbot or Humphrey will go for her I hope. Mrs. Smith and the little Darling are in fine health & we had the pleasure of Mr. Thompsons Company at dinner. After dinner Judge Farrar joined me, and we rode over to Portsmouth, making a short stay at Judge Wingate's, who urged us very much to stay all night, but Monday evening between 6&7 o'clock we found ourselves at this place. Saturday we dined at Mrs. Adams' found her and the young daughter in fine health. Sunday we had the pleasure of seeing baptism administered to Martha Adams, the young heiress. There is much solemnity and some ceremony about this sacred Rite, all which was performed with much decency.

I like the Church method much better than the congregational, except a little too much of the ceremonial part, of which, you know, I am not fond in anything. The Infant is brought to church at the beginning of the afternoon service, and Baptism is performed as soon as the first prayer is over, upon which the parties concerned retire home. This prevents the impatience of infants who are, with us, often kept great part of the afternoon. We took tea at Mrs. Adams's, and thus ended the Sabbath. That part of the State business that has come before the Court has ended much to my wish. More

still remains. I shall be at Exeter on Thursday and here again next week. I think there is no probability of my seeing Amherst, till after Dover court. My Health is as good as could be expected after Journeying in such Weather.

Give my love to Mr. Gordon and to all the Children and accept a very great share of it yourself.

J. ATHERTON.

To His Daughter Abigail.

Tuesday, Sept'r 17: 1799.

My dear Abigail, Your fav'r by Silsby gave me exquisite pleasure—as did also Rebecca's letter to her Ma—my satisfaction at hearing all my delightful family was well, was compleat!

I regret that I was not at home to receive the visit of my sister's children, as also the visit of Mr. & Mrs. Marsh—but this enjoyment of my Family is *mine*.

On Wednesday morning last, I sat out from Col. Rogers' for Exeter, and took lodgings at Mrs. Folsom's where my current expenses are 5/. per day finding my own liquors. This is as cheap as I expected, and being very handy to court, will be convenient in bad weather.

The commissioners finished their business last Friday with our usual harmony—on saturday I intended going to Portsmouth, but the weather was bad, and I remained at Exeter—my health is toler-

able, tho' not the best—shall return with Silsby next week, if I do not return sooner. I salute all the Family with the greatest Affection.

J. ATHERTON.

To His Wife.

Monday Octr. 27, 1800.

This morning I was taken, about an Hour before day, with the most severe fit of what I have called suffocation that I ever experienced—it lasted about an Hour, and I am sure I could not have endured it one hour longer. I got some relief from taking spirit and water. Sent for Doctr. Macarty took physick and find myself relieved—expect to be out to court tomorrow. But I confess I have not much courage to go on, and think it somewhat probable I shall end my journey at Keene—however, this is not certain. Should I proceed no farther, I shall probable be at home by thursday or friday night. The court intend to adjourn wednesday night, I shall finish my business tomorrow. I do not know but I ought to say a great deal about matters at home but indeed I do not know what to say, and must leave them to fortune and your management. I think it has been rather bad weather for securing potatoes, there has been so much rain. I dined at Judge Newcombe's Saturday, think her an *excellent* woman—and we had an *excellent* dinner, & *excellent* company. Mrs. Newcombe is about 25 years

younger than her husband. He has but one Daughter, she was at home—fine plump girl.

I shall take all possible care of myself, and think I shall not have another fit very soon. I embrace all the children. Adieu!

J. ATHERTON.

To His Wife

Tuesday Eleven o'clock—

Yes, my dear, I have just arrived at Dover, my health much the same as when I left Amherst—have with some difficulty kept my bed a-night. I have been more fortunate than Judge Farrar—his horse had the impudence to run back and turn them both over in the woods before you get to Jones' in Londonderry—hurt his foot pretty much. The Judge, as a good Husband ought, saved his wife from injury, for she fell onto him. The Chaise they got repaired at the next blacksmiths & pressed on to Chester where I found them Sunday night, almost cured both of his Wound and of the Sciatica. I called on Judge Thornton, of whom I expected money, but got none, then passed over very secure in an excellent new boat. The Judge and Lady went by Epping, I passed on to Exeter where I had the good fortune to meet Two of my fellow Commissioners Coll^d. Gilman & Gen^l. Badger. Mr. Gordon will be very glad of this—we agreed on some arrangements & I passed on & lodged at Coll^d.

Rogers'. He has a daughter very sick—hardly able to ride out & is really dangerous. At Judge Peabody's and Coll. Rogers' they expressed much disappointment, that I had brought none of my family.

The fever so much to be dreaded is not in Exeter or Dover at present.

I have given Charles leave to stay two days at his father's—as they seemed very desirous of it. His sister, the Widow Randal, lately died at Newmarket, has left one orphan child given to a near relation.

Naby's cake proved a very seasonable and agreeable Relief to me—the dinner I got at Jones' was not only very dear, but also of the worst kind, fried pork. Charles drives pretty well and was a great relief to me as I cannot endure much fatigue. Encouragement for you to try. Doctr. Masters visited me at Mr. Rogers' last evening, seems in tolerable Health, but *his* fortune must be looked upon as rather hard. The Revolution ruined him

I think if it should be convenient for you to come to Exeter & stay a few days the last Week of the Court sitting, you might spend the Time agreeably. Think who is to come beforehand—I will write you from Exeter the week after next.

You may tell Humphrey they use stamped paper in the probate offices in these Counties, if he does not know it already. It would give me a considerable degree of satisfaction, to have some Gentleman lodge in the Family a-nights—perhaps Mr.

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Abbot or Humphrey, but if you are quite easy without, I shall leave it to you.

I hope you will all be very happy during my absence. Adieu!

J. ATHERTON.

P. S. The Governor is gone on his Tour, and will I believe be but one day in Amherst.

I shall enclose you three dollars, which you will use for the purposes you think best. I forgot Winn—perhaps he must have one or two of them.

To His Daughter Frances.

Wednesday Evening May 5th 1802.

My very dear Frances,

We have just received the distressing news [the death of her husband, William Gordon]—and altho it was what we had reason to expect; yet I did not seem to be prepared for such an event. I could not realize it, but flattered myself it might not happen, or that it was at a distance. But alas! all hope is now at an end! I immediately sent Mr. Story to Charles, who is at Hopkinton Court. Rebecca will take the stage in the morning for Boston—her company and the natural firmness of her mind will, I hope, be a relief and comfort to you.

What will it avail to tell you to summon all your fortitude to your assistance? Surely no one ever needed more—the loss will be irreparable to us all, but more especially to you! I have ever thought

it of little avail to reason with the feelings of the heart; yet perhaps something may be done. There is always one irresistible consideration in these great events of providence. They cannot be altered! Our tears, our deepest distress, reach not the departed Friend! They cannot alter *what is*—They may indeed be injurious to ourselves, and for that reason, as much as possible to be avoided. Reason itself perhaps increases our griefs, and all her admonitions are, at best, but idle tales. The heart is too deeply wounded to listen to her cold and formal lessons. Are we then, without Remedy? far otherwise—The great Ruler and Disposer of all things has not left the Sons and Daughters of men without a healing Angel—and has said unto them, *Time shall heal thy Sorrows*. Heaven is but claiming its own: are not we too selfish to murmur at the decree that makes our friend eternally happy?

You ask me if you have done right in consenting to the place of interment. I cannot say you have done wrong—I rather think you have done right—You kindly advise me to *take care of my health*—I do. but cannot say that it mends much. It was no small consolation to me to hear William was with you.

All has been done that could be done—the rest must be left to the disposal of Heaven!

With the deepest Sympathy and Affection—

J. ATHERTON.

44 AMHERST AND OUR FAMILY TREE

Addressed "To Mr. Kent, Abigail & Anna."

AMHERST May 12: 1802.

My very dear Children,

Inclose you Charles's letter, which will give you a particular account of the last scene that closed the useful and important life of our beloved Friend [William Gordon]. Our loss is beyond calculation! the attempt would be in vain—we have only to learn to sustain it with fortitude, and supply the loss of so many excellencies, by our own virtues. Alas! he is no more!

It was thought best, that he should be interred at Boston—there was the family Tomb—His Father & Mother, & Grand father, were entombed *there*. The state of my health would not permit me to go down, tho' it is rather better than it has been—indeed, I tho't Charles's advice was right, and that it was not best for any more of us to go down. Frances must be very much distressed—but I hope Rebecca's fortitude will be a relief to her—Our Friends must leave us, or we must leave them—these distressing scenes are unavoidable. The sorrows of the Living avail not the departed Friend! Vain are all human calculation, even upon the most flattering prospects of happiness! Still it is best, it is right, that we should make the best we can of this miserable world! That we should create as many innocent enjoyments as our ingenuity can add to the substantial blessings of this sublunary pilgrimage. If there is not a better life, if there is

not a *life* of eternal happiness attainable by the wise and good, All, surely, All is nothing. But there is—

With the most feeling sympathy and affection :

J. ATHERTON.

I thank you, Nancy, for your agreeable letter, & I suppose that is all the answer you will ever get—for it is painful to me to write. We expect the stage every moment, but are at a loss whom to expect. This moment Abigail and Nancy are come.

To His Daughter Elizabeth.

Monday: AMHERST April 11th, 1803.

My very Dear Eliza,

I returned from Chester last friday—on my arrival, I found your letter waiting for me: my delight was inexpressible to find you was so agreeably situated, while the propriety and elegance of your letter was no small addition to the pleasure I felt. But how shall I describe to you my feelings to find our dear Katharine under the Doctr's hands?—and to hear the relation of her misfortunes? Be not alarmed she is now cleverly. Rebecca was at Chester with me, Nancy was at her Sister's, Christopher & Prudence were at the barn, when sitting sewing by the fire, she found her gown was on fire at the back between her shoulders—finding she could not reach it she rose, ran into the kitchen for water finding none, she called for help—her motion set

all of her cloths of a blaze! but Christopher arrived time enough to hear her cry for water. She fell almost suffocated & senseless on the floor! when heaven be thanked! the boy threw water on her and extinguished the flames! & ran for Frances and Nancy—but even when they came, she had not recovered her senses, and was quite deranged. I should not give you such a lively description, was it not in my power to alleviate your sympathy, by assuring you she is now very comfortable, sits up almost all day—sleeps well—is chearfull, & almost free from pain. Doctr. Curtis was immediately sent for—and ordered the application of linc'd oil and lime—this nostrum (which is a new thing taken from a news paper) has answered the purpose to admiration—the fire is taken out and everything goes on well. I think we may pronounce her out of danger. The effects of the fire extend from her waist upwards, consuming part of her hair—the back part of her arms, and partly round her sides—much burnt—leaving, however, all the fore part unassailed. blessed escape! had the assistance of water been delayed two minutes longer (perhaps one) a period would have been put to her life! But blessed be the Overruler of all human Events, she still lives to give felicity to the passing hours!

At Chester we found them over head-and-ears in work about the new house & cellar—little Charles very sick—worms and a bad cold says the Doct. but before we left Chester our little Hero was much better. He parted with his Aunt *Be* with resolution—

but, alas, *Be's* feelings were all awake—Your sister Kent has surprising health considering the fatigue she undergoes. The little Darling, Abby, is as sprightly as a bird, tho' under the influence of a bad cold.

I feel under great Obligation to Mrs. Rowson for her attention to you. Present her my respects—You are now treading the pleasing paths of knowledge and I do not hesitate to believe you pass on with Industry and delight. Recollect nothing is attained valuable without industry & labour! but the compensation in the struggle to acquire knowledge is beyond computation. Ignorance is the most frightful monster that ever preyed upon the human Race. Who are despised? The Ignorant. Who are almost useless, nay a burthen upon society? The ignorant. Who are vicious and extremely wicked? The Ignorant—while Knowledge & Virtue exalt the mind, delight the heart, assimilate the Possessor to angels, and if other possessions and enjoyments are denied, Knowledge and Virtue cannot be taken away by the cross accidents but too often experienced by humanity.

I well know advice is justly expected from a Parent, but alas, it is generally too distant a guardian! my advice will be short—Learn, my dear Child, to govern thyself. This will be a Counselor always at hand. Do nothing to repent of. Repentance is a cruel mistress: never fall into her hands she is as unmerciful as the Tiger. Blessed Innocence! what a lovely Companion!

I am full of confidence that you do not stand in need of being stimulated to the acquirement of useful Knowledge: your own good sense and correct Taste are more than sufficient incitements. I have more to apprehend from your too intense application. Be then careful of your health. If your head Aches or you feel yourself fatigued with application, quit your studies and await the returns of good feelings. Nothing is got by application in a dull hour, but more unavailing Fatigue. Be careful of taking the evening air unless very good—divert yourself indoors, and I permit you to remember, that all innocent diversion, when useful business is not on hand, is almost a duty & is a blessing afforded us by the Author of our being to smooth the rough paths of human life, & restore our faculties to vigor and activity.

May you enjoy, my dear Elizabeth, every felicity compatible with your present situation—and be assured my affection for you is unbounded.

JOSHUA ATHERTON.

To His Daughter Elizabeth.

AMHERST, June 5th, 1803.

My Dear Child,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of ye 28th last, on my return from Concord, and as I find it is somewhat difficult for you to get time to write letters &c, do not wish you to write to me very

often, provided you write to some one of your sisters, that I may hear the state of your health and your situation. I cannot think Mrs. Rowsons removal to Newton will be very convenient for us; but I hope it will be advantageous to her, and she undoubtedly must consult her own interest in these matters. A course of Virtue in life is not always easy—but the first step in such a course is a firm resolution to pursue it. This I observe with great satisfaction, by your letter, you have resolved to do. May heaven protect you and grant you success! Indeed, I feel little anxiety on this account—your behaviour has allways been marked with good sense, and uncommon discretion. I have therefore no cause of uneasiness. Your frequent turns of the head-ache is distressing, but I hope, age will overcome it. It is often owing to bad shoes or too much dampness to the feet.

When you left home you was troubled with ringworms. It is said rubing them with Ketch-up, (such as is commonly used in cooking) is an infallible cure—you can easily try it if you are still tormented with them.

Mrs. Rowson wrote me the 5th of may—and among other things requested about 42 dollars—your brother answered this part, (which I suppose was the most essential part of the answer to be given) by sending the money to you, which I suppose you have given to her, or such part thereof as would be due for one quarter which she requested on account of her changing her situation. In her

letter she says much in your favour—which you may be sure was very agreeable to me—and I have no doubt you will continue to deserve her good opinion.

Your remaining at Boston will give you an opportunity to see the town and give you also some Idea of a city life, which most women are much enamoured with. I am under great obligation to Mr. & Mrs. Melville & family for their attention & kindness to you. Present them my unfeigned Gratitude and Respect.

Katharine is almost well—tho' she has had a *sore* time of it. It was with some difficulty that I found myself reconciled to not seeing you for so long a time—but cannot say that it was not upon-the-whole best that you should tarry to the end of the first quarter.

Mr. Gordon and William set out tomorrow morning for Boston, & by night you will have the pleasure of seeing them, & hearing all about Amherst.

Inclose you five dollars your brother sends you—which I suppose will answer your little expenses. The letter to Mrs. Rowson you will deliver. It is an answer to hers in addition to the money sent by Humphrey. Wish you a very pleasant time of it at Newton.

J. ATHERTON.

To His Daughter Rebecca.

AMHERST, Augt. 23 1803

My Dear Rebecca,

I duly received your letter and was greatly delighted with its contents. Perhaps there is nothing more agreeable to a person in my stage of life than a friendly remembrance by their former acquaintance—and the continued friendliness of the gentlemen you mention is peculiarly gratifying to me. Should you see again Govr. Gilman you will present him with my great attachment & respects. Judge Peabody has a great share of my friendship & esteem, and I should feel the highest satisfaction to have it in my power to render him any service in these perverse times of opposition to everything that is estimable—I mean by his enemies: assure him of my unviolable attachment.

I have nothing new to inform you of interesting to you for I need not tell you I have got through the fatigue of haying very well &c &c—my health is much as usual and if anything could mend it it would be to hear you was happy. This gratification I have enjoyed & pray God it may be continued.

It is agreed that nothing at home requires your attendance, but the loss of your Company; so you are at full liberty to indulge your own inclination as to gratifying your friends especially the amiable Mary Ann—pray give my love to her—my respects to Coll. Toppan & Lady &c &c.

But my dr Rebecca consider the Supr. Court sits in the neighborhood of Hampton very soon—and whether your present happiness may not be interrupted from that quarter, you will consider—as I with pleasure flatter myself you do not wish for such interruption. Judge Smith & Lady & all that enquire after me & your particular acquaintance will receive my best regards, as your discretion shall direct.

Humphrey goes very early this morning & I must break off snap short, to get the letter to him before he goes—and can only wish you the felicity you seem to me to deserve! and recommend you to cultivate the passing hour in every innocent enjoyment. Life is hard enough when we make the best of it and we ought not to loose it's favour.

Am, with more than common affection yr
JOSHUA ATHERTON.

To His Daughter Abigail.

AMHERST, March 31st, 1808.

My very Dear Abigail,

I have attempted to write you several times, but between joy and grief my pen would not move. Your visit had given me the highest pleasure, and when you left us, I had no apprehension of danger; and should have let Nancy accompany you, had I not had a kind of secret impulse, I know not why,

against her going; for there was no real objection to her attending you.

Between twelve and one o'clock Capt. Means and Catharine passed, and sent in word that you had all been in the river and rather more favorable than the facts turned out, but language cannot express my astonishment and anxiety. My imagination painted you and our little darlings struggling in the water! with strong suspicions that we had been deceived by the message. In this uncertainty we remained till very late in the afternoon when full information of all that had happened arrived and tho' many parts were joyful and better than I feared, yet the loss of the unfortunate Sarah Kent was deeply afflicting! She had been with us till we were very much attached to her—her good sense and agreeable manners had been very pleasing. We had parted in the morning with much friendship. Alas, never to meet again! But it was impossible to save her! Mr. Kent's presence of mind and exertion was almost more than human—to save four while himself was in imminent danger of drowning, how great the exertion! What heartfelt joy have we not felt! But my mind was not soon calmed—one while you and the dear children, that a few hours before I had with *pleasure* and *pride* seen playing before me, were now struggling in the water—and then alternate joy and distress occupied my mind, nor was it easily removed. Alas, poor Sarah! To afflict ourselves will not recall her! The great Ruler of Heaven and Earth still

leaves us many enjoyments. It is our duty to improve them. We must forget the afflictions and seize upon the blessings of life. Enjoy your little darlings—make them wise and happy.

Mr. Kent seems to be rather out of spirits, but we have enjoyed but little of his company, besides court employment, he has so many visits to pay. My health is much the same as when you was here. I keep house and have not had an ill turn lately. Jane Kent is presented with my kindest love and sympathy! I need not tell you, I wish you every felicity.

Affectionately yours,

J. ATHERTON.

I had a letter lately from Frances. She is well and happy. Mr. Kent will inform you of the rest. Abby, without a Doctor, has grown plump and fresh—exceedingly gratified to see her Pa.

Of Abigail, wife of Joshua Atherton, the record is slight. We know that she was the daughter of the Reverend Thomas Goss, but I think it is not generally known that she was directly descended, through her mother's family, the Wades, from Governor Simon Bradstreet and Ann his wife, who bore the proud distinction of being the "first poetess of New England." Ann was a daughter of Governor Thomas Dudley, but that is not all that is claimed for her in the way of lineage. I am told that there is in the United States a "society

for those who are of royal descent," and that any one who can prove descent from either of the wives of Thomas Dudley is eligible as a member of this select company: for they, the aforesaid wives, were in the line from no less a monarch than Alfred the Great, and also Charlemagne! This sounds apocryphal, and kings are now out of fashion; but if a respectable New England woman was obliged to select an ancestor of that class, I think she could not do better than to take Alfred the Great. As for Ann Bradstreet's gift as a poetess, we have small means of judging. No edition of her poems survives that I know of, but I have come across a few lines written by her after the Bradstreet house in North Andover was burned in 1666. They are as follows:

"In silent night when rest I took
For sorrow neer I did not look.
I waken'd was with thundering nois
And Piteous shrieks of dreadful voice
The fearful sound of 'fire' and fire
Let no man know was my desire."

No letter of Abigail Atherton's exists, and the only work of her hands that has come down to us is a sampler worked by her before she was married, which hangs to-day in the room of one of her great-granddaughters. It bears this aspiration:

"On earth let my example shine,
And when I leave this state,
May Heaven receive this soul of mine
To bliss divinely great.

ABIGAIL GOSS."

But what a story we can build from the facts of her life that are known to us! Married when a girl of sixteen; mother of fourteen children, seven of whom she was to lose in their babyhood; wife of a man who was for several years an object of suspicion and dislike to his neighbors, who for nearly two years was confined in jail when, it is said, guns used to be pointed at her and her daughter as they walked to church on a Sunday—a man whose position until the end of his life was in constant jeopardy from his uncompromising attitude in public affairs. Evidently great opportunities were afforded our great-grandmother to realize the earthly part of her aspirations, and there is every reason to believe that those opportunities were most fully improved. Her son Charles writes of her years after as an angel wife and mother; and through many letters written by her daughters we learn, if indirectly, to respect and love the mother who had such daughters. Certainly her example shone conspicuously in her children. And who can tell how much that is good in mind and character has come down to her descendants from her of whom we know so little?

Mrs. Atherton was a woman of great gentleness, a lover of home, a kind neighbor. This story of her was told me by one of her granddaughters. She had on one occasion spun thirteen skeins of fine soft yarn which were hung out on the well-sweep to bleach. Her woman forgot to take them in one night, and Mrs. Atherton, as she was dressing next morning, saw them from her window and counted the skeins as she reflected on the carelessness of her maid who had left them out over night. Thirteen: not one missing. Just then a dear neighbor, with whom she lived on the friendliest terms, came to the well to fill her pail. Mrs. Atherton turned away from the window a moment, and when she looked again three of the skeins were gone. She was greatly distressed, for it was impossible that the skeins could have been taken by anyone except her neighbor, Mrs. H. All the morning she pondered as to what course she should pursue, and when, in the middle of the afternoon, she paid her neighbor a call, her countenance showed such signs of distress that Mrs. H. earnestly asked her what was wrong, or if she were ill. She replied that she was perfectly well, but that she was greatly distressed by the knowledge that a friend, whom she trusted as she did herself, had taken what did not belong to her. Mrs. H., understanding at once what was meant, evinced deep sorrow, and begged forgiveness, which was readily granted.

Mrs. Atherton died October 28, 1801; and the following notice of her death appeared in the next

number of the local paper, the Amherst "Cabinet": "Died. In this town on Wednesday last, after a long and distressing illness, Mrs. Abigail Atherton, aged 53, consort of Hon. Joshua Atherton, Esqr. By this afflicting instance of mortality, the husband is deprived of an affectionate wife, the children of an amiable and tender mother, and the neighbors and acquaintances of the deceased of an esteemed and benevolent friend. Though it is a pleasing and happy consolation that her removal from this 'world of sorrow and sickness' is to 'fairer worlds on high'; yet while recounting the many virtues of her life, the sympathetic tear descending the cheek of her surviving friends drops at the recollection of departed worth."

CHAPTER III

ROBERT MEANS

A year after Joshua Atherton came to Amherst, in the autumn of 1774, Robert Means moved there from Merrimac. He was born in Stewartstown, Ireland, in 1742, and was the son of Thomas Means. The name seems to have been originally Mayne. The Reverend James H. Means, a grandnephew of Robert, visited Stewartstown and afterward wrote to my father as follows: "At Belfast I met Alexander Mayne who claimed connection, and at Portrush, near Giant's Causeway, a Presbyterian pastor, Rev. Mr. Mayne, also connected. Thomas, another brother of Robert, was a minister settled, I believe, in Garvagh." Why the name was changed by all branches of the family when they came to this country, I have never been able to discover.

Robert was a weaver by trade, and, sailing for America with his friend, Jacob McGaw, had landed at Boston in 1766. They first settled at Merrimac, New Hampshire, which they made their headquarters, and then travelled about the country with their goods on their backs, as there were no selling-agents in those days through whom to dispose of the product of their looms. But their business increased so fast that it was thought best for one of the young men to establish another trade-centre at Amherst; and as neither wished to go,

the matter was decided by casting lots. The lot fell to Robert Means; and there at Amherst he carried on his trade of weaving for several years, but later devoted himself entirely to the mercantile part of the business.

Tradition says that it was on one of his trips about the country as a peddler of his cloths that he met and fell in love with Mary McGregor, daughter of the Reverend David McGregor, a Presbyterian minister at Londonderry, New Hampshire. She was a granddaughter of the Reverend James McGregor, who had emigrated, with many members of his parish, from Londonderry, Ireland. After much prospecting, this Scotch-Irish company had received a grant of land in southern New Hampshire which they named Londonderry, and where they settled. Years later the township was divided, and that part where the first settlers built their church is now Derry. A church still stands there on the hill, and in the adjoining churchyard are the graves of Mary's grandfather, James, her father, David, and their wives. Robert Means married Mary McGregor on November 24, 1774, just about the time that he moved to Amherst, and a little more than a year after Joshua Atherton had brought his little family to the town. It was natural that these two vigorous men should become friends, and that their children should grow into ever closer intimacy; it was natural, also, that in due course of time the families should become linked by ties of blood as well as of friendship.



MARY MCGREGOR MEANS



ROBERT MEANS



And as a fact, in 1808, David McGregor, the son of Robert Means, married Catharine, a daughter of Atherton; and later Robert Means, Junior, skipped a generation to marry a granddaughter of Atherton, Abigail Kent.

The record that I have been able to procure of Robert Means is meager as compared with that of Joshua Atherton: for no son wrote his memoir, and no letters of his have come down to us. He was much loved by his daughters, as is shown by their letters, and by the fact that each of them named a son for him. He was undoubtedly a man of social as well as financial standing; and the "History of Amherst" states that he was "noted for honesty, fair dealing and close attention to business and in time became one of the widely known and distinguished merchants of the town and state. His prosperity increased rapidly. In 1797 and onward, he paid the heaviest tax assessed on any person in the town. For a number of years he represented the Town of Amherst at the General Court and served two years in the Senate; and also was a member of the Executive Council. He acted as Justice of the Peace for several years, was Treasurer of the County of Hillsborough for a long series of years, and was also an officer in the militia." The author of the History was also kind enough to say that "his descendants have been numerous and respectable." They are still numerous, and, I hope, respectable.

Mary McGregor, the wife of Robert Means, was a woman of great force of character. Her father, David, was a distinguished preacher. I have heard Professor Park say that he was once called to the pastorate of the Brick Church in New York, but declined, saying that Londonderry offered him a larger field. Her grandfather, James, was said to be a lineal descendant of Rob Roy; if so, he inherited none of the lawlessness of his noted ancestor, for his undoubted personal courage and readiness to fight on occasion were demonstrated in behalf of, and not against, the law. Of Mary's courage, a pretty little story has come down to us. She was walking one day near the Merrimac River with her brother Robert when he saw a tree that had been thrown across a narrow part of the stream, and, wishing to impress her with his bravado, he stepped out upon the uncertain footway. He expected cries of remonstrance, but no sound came from Mary. He dared not look back to see if she had fainted; but when he reached the farther bank he turned about, and saw his sister, in her high-heeled shoes, tripping along close behind him.

A very different sort of woman from Abigail Atherton was Madam Means. Her virtues were of a sterner sort. Evidently she was a terror to evildoers, and wielded a power of no negative kind. One of her granddaughters told me a story of her hiring a man servant. It was at a time when the mind of New England was thoroughly imbued with the idea that all men are created free and

equal, and it was extremely difficult to hire "help" unless you were willing to allow them to eat at the family table. The answer to all "aristocrats" who required servants to eat at a separate table was: "Well, I guess there won't be but one table in heaven!" Madam Means was engaging a man who had applied for a place. After some preliminaries, she said to him: "You see that line in the carpet? When you come for orders, you will come as far as that line, no farther." The man, somewhat confounded at such definite drawing of the social line, remarked that he supposed that he should eat with the family. "No, not with my family," was the response. Then followed the usual supposition as to the tables in the celestial world. "I know nothing of that," said my great-grandmother. "It may be so. Or, if there are two tables, you may sit at the first and I at the second. But here in this world there will be two tables in my house, and my servants will sit at the second." Whether the man took the place, history saith not.

Madam Means was a power in the town. She ruled her family with an absolute sway, and she ruled them well. Anything like feebleness of moral fibre she despised. So stern was she in this regard that I have been told she turned her firstborn from his home because of a sin against her moral code. She survived her husband fifteen years, and died in Boston, in 1838, at the house of her daughter Nancy, Mrs. Amos Lawrence.

CHAPTER IV

SECOND GENERATION: ATHERTON

Of the fourteen children—seven sons and seven daughters—who were born to Joshua and Abigail Atherton, only one son and six daughters survived their infancy; and of this second generation, who were to grow up in intimacy with the six children of Robert Means, we know much from the many letters that have come down to us—a correspondence largely in the hands of the women of the two families.

At the close of the Revolutionary War, when railways were unknown and manufacturing centres were not yet in existence, Amherst was a social and legal centre. Then, the bitterness of the war past, Squire Atherton filled the place in the community to which his ability and high character entitled him; and Robert Means, no less, entertained many distinguished visitors. Amherst was the county town and therefore the seat of the court, and in the intervals of professional duty, the young lawyers who came to practice there were ready to pay polite and dignified attention to the ladies of the town, including my great aunts. Long visits seem to have been common and when Rebecca Atherton went to Portsmouth or Exeter, for a month's visit, her dear friends, Elizabeth and Mary Means, would write her long letters telling her of the gayeties of Amherst. In these letters dances

and card parties are often recorded, and the attentions and conversations of their beaux receive full justice.

There seems to be a marked change in their point of view when they married. One may even be led to think that in those days marriage was the equivalent of conversion. No more are letters filled with descriptions of dances and gayeties, but with staid and serious comment on the new life into which they had entered. When, for instance, Elizabeth Means married the Reverend Jesse Appleton, her letters reveal anxiety for the soul's health of her unmarried correspondents rather than interest in their frivolous pursuits. The same change is manifest in the letters of her sisters and her friends. Marriage seemed to stiffen them. The difference between the married and unmarried was marked by a certain formality of address. Charles Atherton, writing to Joshua, his father, of the death of his brother-in-law, William Gordon, speaks of his sister as "Mrs. Gordon." And by their nephews and nieces all of that generation were spoken of as Aunt Kent, Aunt Lawrence, and so on, with the exception of the only unmarried member of either family who was known by the more familiar title of Aunt Nancy.

I never saw my grandmother, but I can remember seeing a goodly number of her generation. If my memory serves me, the ladies all wore "false fronts," as they were called, and close caps, and black gowns. They seemed to me, as a child, rather

formidable, and I never got over a sense of the propriety of minding my *ps* and *qs* in their presence. It was a revelation, when reading their letters, to find that their formality was but the thin crust which the fashion of the time required them to assume to veil, with becoming dignity, their warm and vital personality.

Of the seven children of Joshua Atherton who grew to maturity, the second child and the only son was the first to be born in Amherst. There, on August 14, 1773, was born Charles Humphrey Atherton. He was graduated from Harvard in 1794; and after studying law with his father and his brother-in-law, William Gordon, he established himself in practise in 1797. On October 30, 1803, he married Mary Ann, daughter of Christopher Toppan of Hampton. Seven children were born to them, of whom only the eldest son, Charles Gordon, and the one daughter, Mary Ann Toppan, survived the parents.

Charles Humphrey Atherton lived in Amherst until his death on January 8, 1853. It is recorded that "he occupied a prominent place in the Hillsborough bar for nearly fifty years"; and he seems to have endeavored to do his duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call him. There was always a cold correctness of demeanor in every event of his life, and he was invariably spoken of by his sisters simply as "Brother." Politically

Mr. Atherton was a Federalist of the school of Washington and Hamilton, and after the breaking up of the old party he became a prominent member of the new Whig party. He was a Mason, and became even a Master Mason. In this connection a story is told of the Reverend Humphrey Moore of Milford, who was a noted character of the day. "At a meeting of the Lodge of which Mr. Atherton was a member, Mr. Moore, who was not a Mason, being present was asked to act as chaplain, complying with the request he prayed as follows: 'Oh Lord, we come here to pray to thee. We know not for what. If thith inthituthion be a good one, wilt thou bleth it. If it be an evil one, wilt thou curth it. Amen.'"

In his religious belief Mr. Atherton was a Unitarian of the Channing school. He was active in the Unitarian controversy of his time, and in establishing a church of that denomination in Amherst which was called "The Christian Society," and in the settlement of the Reverend Mr. Sewall as its pastor. Two of his sisters, Nancy and Abigail, Mrs. Kent, were also Unitarians. His wife was an ardent convert and with the abiding zeal of the convert when on her deathbed in October, 1817, she was moved to send for the Reverend Nathan Lord, then the Calvinistic young pastor of the Congregational Church, to discuss with him her religious beliefs and to show him how her faith as a Unitarian supported her at the hour of death as in life. Her husband, and also a brother-in-law, a

Unitarian clergyman of Lancaster, the Reverend Doctor Thayer, were present at the interview. After her death there were so many rumors concerning this conference that it was thought best by Mr. Atherton and Doctor Thayer to publish an account of it in the Amherst "Cabinet." Doctor Thayer therefore wrote the following "Memorandum," after reading which most of us might say that Mrs. Atherton had rather the best of the argument. Yet it is fair to remember that Doctor Lord was heavily handicapped by the presence of her two supporters, as well as by the fact that his opponent was on her deathbed. Doctor Lord owned that she died a Christian, but maintained that she had become one when a member of the orthodox Congregational Church—proof, he may have thought, of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, which, as will be seen, she denied. Doctor Lord was not content to allow Doctor Thayer's account of the interview to rest the case, and answered it in the "Cabinet"; Mr. Atherton then took up the argument, and for several weeks the controversy raged, until the editor declined to print any more letters on the subject.

THE MEMORANDUM

I arrived in Amherst on Saturday, August 30 to visit my sister Atherton, on account of her dangerous sickness.

Between 3 and 4 o'clock P. M. a favorable opportunity presenting, I thus introduced a religious conversation. Her reply and the subsequent remarks were in substance, and as nearly as I can recollect, in language, as follows: "My Sister, I rejoice to find you in your present tranquil state of mind."

Mrs. Atherton interrupted by saying, "Mr. Thayer, don't you speak to me so; don't you praise me; I do not deserve the praise of men, my greatest desire is to be found worthy the praise of God." To this I replied, "I do not mean to praise you, I only mean to express my joy at the intelligence I have received of your submission and resignation to the will of God. It is also my consoling belief, that a review of your life of your endeavor to perform your duty, must be a ground of hope that you shall share in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, and be pardoned and accepted."

Mrs. Atherton said, "I know that God is merciful, but I tremble when I read those words of my Saviour, 'strive to enter in at the straight gate.' 'Many shall seek to enter, but shall not be able.' You know also what he has said of the foolish virgins, who took no oil for their lamps, and against whom the door was shut." She added, "I know I have received many talents; I fear I have not improved them as I ought. I am convinced that I am a great sinner. My only dependence is on the merits of my Redeemer. I do not despair. I hope but my hope is mixed with many fears. I

desire to be humble and penitent, and I pray that God will not cast me off."

Finding her thus in doubt, and diffident of her own attainments, believing her to be truly contrite, I intreated her recollection of these passages of Scripture. "I never said to any of the seed of Jacob, seek me in vain." "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Fathers house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you." "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." I also brought to her view the vision made to St. John in the Apocalypse. "I beheld and a great multitude, which no man could number, of all people, and nations, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

On hearing these, Mrs. Atherton said "I know that these are very delightful promises and views, but for myself I still have very great fears." This conversation closed, with her requesting me to pray for her. She added, "I do not wish you to pray for my recovery, for I think it a mockery of God, when a person is so near death, as I believe myself to be, to pray thus, but I wish you to pray that if it be the will of God, I may be patient; that I may be prepared to die; and that God will have mercy on my soul."

I had no further interview with her in relation to her spiritual state, till I was awaked about 3

o'clock this morning by one of the watchers, who informed me that Mrs. Atherton wished to see me. On entering her chamber, I perceived her countenance greatly animated. She immediately addressed me thus in apparent ecstasy. "I sent for you Mr. Thayer, that I might tell you the mercy of God has shown me. He has given me a perfect assurance, and I shall be happy I feel that he has accepted my penitence, and that I shall go to be a partaker of the joy, which 'eye hath not seen or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of.' I think it would be next to a miracle should I be restored to health. If this be the will of God, I desire to submit, but I have no wish to live and mingle again with the sufferings and sorrows of the world. I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Tell my friends not to shed a tear for me."

I expressed to her my joy in her perfect state of mind and my hope that God would continue "to lift upon her the light of his countenance." Mrs. Atherton then delivered me a message to Mr. Lord, with a request that I would communicate it to him, if she should not live to see him. Then Dr. Spalding informed me that at Mrs. Atherton's request, he had sent for Mr. Lord.

By Mrs. Atherton's desire I awaked Mr. Atherton, who, on entering her chamber, received from her, in my hearing, information of her joy, and prospects, similar to what she gave me.

Mr. Lord soon arrived. The message given me

for him, I heard Mrs. Atherton communicate in person, as nearly as I can recollect as follows: "I wished you to know, sir, the goodness of God to me. He has given me a perfect assurance that I shall be happy. I do not however trust in any worthiness of my own. I believe there is a peculiar efficacy in his son's death. What this efficacy is, is not revealed. I feel that my sins are washed away in his blood. I believe him to be an all sufficient Saviour, not an Almighty Saviour. I believe him that he is not God himself, but the Son of God; 'the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person.' There are those who go to an extreme. I should be unwilling to be one of those." She added, "You know I have not believed in the doctrines which you preach of total depravity, election, and reprobation. I have a full persuasion of your sincerity and piety, that you are anxious to do good in this place and to awake sinners from their carelessness. But I entreat you not to be influenced by human systems, but to read the word of God, with prayer, I entreat you not to be governed by what Calvin, Luther, or Origen say, but to read the Scriptures. I know I may be in error, but I believe that I shall be forgiven. We may both be in error, but if sincere, we shall be forgiven."

Mr. Lord said, "I hope if I am in error, it will be revealed to me."

Mrs. Atherton replied, "We are very much under the influence of education, and you cannot expect

to have this revealed, unless you discard human systems and read the Scriptures with prayer." She added, "I wish you to have more charity. Charity, Mr. Lord that is the point. The Saviour says in his gospel, why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? To his own Master he standeth or falleth. We must all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. Is it right, Mr. Lord, to condemn those, who differ from us in opinion?"

He observed, "I hope I do not assume the prerogative of the judge."

Mrs. Atherton asked, "Is it not doing this to say, that it is impossible for persons to be saved, who do not believe in your doctrines?"

To which, Mr. Lord replied, "Salvation we are told is obtained through sanctification of the spirit and belief in the truth by those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God."

Mrs. Atherton observed, "You separate the foreknowledge of God from election. You get into a sad jumble. Your election is not the Scripture election. I do not think with you, we can do something for ourselves. God hath required it of us."

Mr. Lord began the sentence. "We must wait." Mrs. Atherton interrupted him by saying "We must not wait, Sir, our Saviour has told us to 'strive to enter into heaven.' We have no more reason to expect salvation without striving, than a man has to expect to preserve life without the use of daily food. 'If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts

unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give the Holy Spirit to them who ask it.' ” She added, “We have it in our power to grieve the Spirit. Unless we do abuse the grace of God, and neglect the means he has given us, we shall be saved. She asked Mr. Lord, “Do you not rejoice with me in my prospects?” He not immediately answering, she earnestly added, “Say, Mr. Lord, tell me, do you not rejoice.”

Mr. Lord answered, “It is a very desirable thing to have hope.”

Mrs. Atherton said, “I have a hope, which shall not make me ashamed. I may become delirious, I may pass through many agonies, but I shall go to heaven, and I long to be with my Saviour, and my God. But heaven, altho' a place of rest, is not a place of idleness. I shall be employed in contemplating the perfections of God, and Redeemer, which is employment enough for eternity. ‘Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive blessings, and honor, and glory, and praise.’ ”

Mrs. Atherton said to Mr. Lord, “If my life is spared, which I think would be next to a miracle, I hope I shall not be suffered to forsake my God, for I do not believe in your ideas of the perseverance of saints. I believe we may fall from grace.” Mrs. Atherton then asked Mr. Lord if he understood her, if she expressed her ideas clearly. Mr. Lord replied in the affirmative. Mrs. A. asked, “Will you remember it, Sir?” Mr. Lord answered,

"Such a conversation, Madam, cannot be easily forgotten."

Mrs. Atherton expressed to Mr. Lord a hope that his feelings would not be wounded by the communication she had made. She assured him that she felt constrained by a sense of duty to say what she did, and intreated, that if, contrary to her present expectation her life should be spared, he would not be prejudiced against her or her friends on the account.

After the above conversation, Mrs. Atherton was seized with a violent ague fit. In the midst of the severest agonies, she exclaimed, "Do not suppose my sufferings great, my mind is so full of comfort, I consider this as nothing."

After retiring from the chamber, I asked Mr. Lord in the presence of Mr. Atherton whether Mrs. Atherton did not appear to him to have her recollection perfectly, and to be in the full exercise of her mind. In perfect accordance with my own opinion, he replied in the affirmative.

The above, so far as it related to Mrs. Atherton, who said, after proposing two additional sentences, which I perfectly recollected, that the representation was correct.

I also read the same to Mr. A. and Dr. Spalding, who were present and who each affirmed their belief of its truth.

At the request of my brother Charles H. Atherton, and in the hope that it may afford him some

consolation under his present afflicting prospect, I have transcribed the above for his perusal.

NATHANIEL THAYER.

Monday, Sept. 1, 1817.

Mr. Lord had remonstrated with Charles Atherton on the propriety of publishing this memorandum as inviting "the attention of the public to a conversation which from its nature and from the circumstances attending it" seemed to him "improper for the notice of the world." In a letter to Atherton he had also offered certain corrections in the manuscript which had not been incorporated in print, and he now saw his duty only in public response. His apologia appeared in the next number of the "Farmer's Cabinet." As to his difference with Mr. Atherton: "I wrote to Mr. Atherton soon after hearing of his intention of publishing the Memorandum. When that intention was made known to me and Dr. Thayer's manuscript which was left at the printing office had been read; I waited on Mr. Atherton with a view to dissuade him from his purpose. I was not satisfied with the manuscript. I was afraid that it would excite feelings in many minds and conversation in many circles that would tend to no profit since the subject of them was removed from our sight. I was reluctant also to appear before the public in the attitude in which I was placed

in the sick chamber whither I was called, not so much to exercise my ministerial function as to be admonished of error. Not that I was unwilling to have the conversation which took place at that time made public, if any good purpose could be answered by it. But I knew of none and therefore was loath to brave the recollections of a very painful scene thus openly revived." However, as Atherton had persisted in his determination to publish, Mr. Lord now quotes from his letter of protest and affirms his recollection as there stated: "Mrs. Atherton's design in sending for me is not stated so fully as it was expressed by herself. As I recollect, Mrs. Atherton was not only desirous to have me rejoice with her in the goodness of God; but also *felt it her duty* to admonish me, in that solemn hour, of my erroneous opinions, to caution me against exhibiting them to my people and to convince me that a belief in the doctrines which I preached is not necessary to give peace to the mind in death as she herself was an instance. There was a remarkable order and connection in Mrs. Atherton's disavowal of the doctrines I preach not fully preserved in the manuscript. She wished me to understand distinctly that, altho' during the night she had rec'd perfect and unwavering assurances of future happiness, she discarded as unscriptural and irrational the doctrines of election and reprobation, altho' she felt herself to be *utterly sinful*, having never done one good thing. (I use her own language which I have been careful to

recollect.) She disbelieved the doctrine of total depravity, which I preach; altho' she disclaimed all self-sufficiency, and rested her hope on the merits of Jesus Christ, she did not believe him to be an Almighty Savior. There was a very noticeable sequence in these remarks upon which I have frequently meditated since that time. The manuscript does not give my first reply to these and other remarks, as recorded, entire. After expressing a disposition to be rectified should I be in error, I said 'but the evidence I have of the truth of the doctrines which I preach, is such as not to be easily shaken' and was about to speak of them as the foundation of my own hope when Mrs. Atherton replied as written. After my speaking of the salvation of God's elect by the 'sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,' Mrs. Atherton began to speak with emphasis of the doctrine of election, as written, when you [Mr. Atherton] remarked that 'the present is an unfavorable time for the discussion of such abstruse points.'" Mrs. Atherton, however, was not to be discouraged, and Mr. Lord fears that the imperfect nature of Dr. Thayer's report might make it appear that "I believe it right to discourage the unregenerate from any efforts for their own salvation and to persuade them to be quiet in their sins and to 'wait' unconcerned for a divine impulse; a sentiment which I utterly disclaim and consider as highly inconsistent with revealed truth and the most pernicious and fatal tendency in the concerns of the soul."

The "History of Amherst" states that "Mr. Lord came to his work while yet in the springtime of life, a thoroughly educated gentleman with decided convictions and an iron will. The civil dissensions of the town had been healed by the incorporation of the different parishes into towns; but differences of opinion existed in his church which he was called upon to reconcile or combat. Into this contest he threw himself with his whole energy, managing his case with consummate skill." Reading this extract somewhat lessens the sympathy which we might otherwise feel for him when the midnight call came to attend Mrs. Atherton's deathbed that he might witness the ecstasies of her Unitarian faith, but it does not lessen one's admiration for his zeal.

Frances, the eldest daughter of Joshua and Abigail Atherton, was born in Harvard, Massachusetts, October 31, 1766, and was therefore seven years old when the family came to Amherst. In 1787, when she was twenty-one, she married William Gordon, who, as we have seen, was a law student in her father's office, and after his marriage settled in Amherst. Of this marriage was born one son, William, several letters from whom form part of our chronicle. He was of a gentle and lovable nature, but when quite young he became subject to mild attacks of insanity. He knew when

such attacks were imminent, and voluntarily retired to the hospital at Brattleborough to stay until he had recovered. In consequence of this infirmity he never married.

We gather from the record in many letters that Frances was a woman of warm affection and great hospitality, but with a nervous and somewhat restless temperament. Her father, in 1794, wrote to her: "Keep up your spirits if possible, you will have this argument for it at least that depression cannot afford you any kind of help, but on the other hand increases every other misery. Could we, my Dear, die cheerfully we should be great gainers by it—how much more should we gain to live so! Be very happy, says your affectionate father, J. Atherton."

William Gordon was greatly beloved by his father-in-law and by all members of his wife's family. He filled many offices of public trust, and was a member of Congress. He was only thirty-nine years of age when he died, in 1802. In 1806, Frances married Benjamin West of Charlestown, New Hampshire, where she lived until her death in 1838. There were no children by this marriage, and as her son William Gordon never married, this branch of the Atherton family died with him. She seems to have been remarkably fortunate in both her marriages, as the amiable and lovable qualities of her second husband, also, are indicated in many letters written to her by him, and also in letters received from her sisters after visits at Charlestown.

Mr. West was a member of the famous Hartford Convention which was composed of most respectable and loyal citizens, twenty-six in number, from the New England States. In 1814 they met at Hartford to discuss what could be done to alleviate the distressing conditions existing in all New England industries as a result of the War of 1812. Democrats were ready to contend that they met for treasonable purposes, and John Quincy Adams seems to have started the trouble by suggesting to Thomas Jefferson that the Convention was held in the interest of England. The names of the members show the absurdity of such a charge: among them were William Prescott, George Cabot, Harrison Gray Otis, and Joseph Lyman from Massachusetts; Chauncey Goodrich, Roger Sherman and James Hillhouse from Connecticut; Noah Webster, also, was in full sympathy with the Convention.

Mr. S. G. Goodrich, whom we know as Peter Parley, gives the following description, in his "Recollections of a Lifetime," of Benjamin West at the time he was attending the Hartford Convention: "One of the oldest and in some respects the most remarkable member of the Convention was Mr. West of New Hampshire. I recollect him distinctly, partly because of the terms of affection and respect in which my uncle (Chauncey Goodrich, Mayor of Hartford) spoke of him. He, too, was often at our house and seldom have I seen a man who commanded such ready love and admiration.

He was then sixty-eight years old: his form was tall but slender, his countenance serene, his voice full of feeling and melody. His appearance indicated the finest moral texture; but when his mind was turned to a subject of interest his brow flashed with tokens of that high intellectual power which distinguished him. His character and his position were well displayed in a single passage of his history. 'He was chosen a member of Congress under the Old Confederation; a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution of his adopted State and a member of Congress under the Constitution; he was appointed Attorney-General and Judge of Probate and yet all these offices he refused owing to his aversion to public life and his sincere unambitious love of domestic peace and tranquillity.' His great abilities, however, were not hidden in a napkin. He devoted himself to the practice of the law, which he pursued with eminent success for the space of thirty years. It was in the evening of his days that he accepted his first prominent public station and that was as a member of the Hartford Convention. This he did under the conviction that it was a period of great difficulty and danger and he felt that duty called upon him to sacrifice his private comfort to public exigencies. Who will believe that man to have been a conspirator or that the people who designated him for this place were traitors!"

An interesting memorandum of Benjamin West's father, Thomas, has come down to us:

On saturday morning May 14, 1763. it pleased an holy God to take to himself (I nothing doubt) my loving & beloved Wife Drusilla within mention. She was decently interred the monday following.

O Lord, prepare me to follow her!

THOS. WEST.

On nov. 30. 1763. I was married unto Mrs. Priscilla Hammond. May God continue her a lasting blessing to me and mine, and make us blessings unto her.

THOS. WEST.

On saturday Oct. 23. 1779. it pleased God to take out of the world & to himself (I nothing doubt) my beloved Wife Priscilla above mentioned; she was decently interred on ye monday following—The Lord prepare me for my approaching dissolution!

THOS. WEST.

On may 3d. 1780. I was married unto Mrs. Deborah Freeman—May God make us mutual blessings the little time we have to live in the world.

THO. WEST.

Abigail, the second daughter of Joshua Ather-ton, was born at Amherst in October, 1775. In 1799 she was married to the Honorable Amos Kent of Chester, New Hampshire, where they lived until his death in 1824. A charming letter to her mother tells of the settlement in her new home which seems not to have occurred until several months after her marriage:

CHESTER, March 17th, 1800.

Sensible, my dear Mama, that you are all impatient to hear from us I am seated to assure you that we find ourselves as happy as any circumstances could make us when we have so recently left such a home. After we parted from Fanny, I was extremely sleigh sick till we stopped at Doct. Thorn's where I felt relieved and continued better until Rebecca and I had made our little parlour wear the appearance of neatness and order. This, however, was no great labor as Mrs. Clough had made the floor very clean and all our things were arranged before dark. My sickness then returned and obliged me to take to my bed. This I did with more reluctance as Judge Livermore had left his boarding house to pass the evening with us and Mr. Kent had sent two miles to procure a pack of good cards. My bed was on the floor but I slept soundly and have been perfectly well ever since. I think myself peculiarly fortunate in having all my

furniture brought so well. There is nothing broken except one tumbler. Mrs. Means appeared to be concerned lest my china should not come safe. Do, Mama, present my best respects to her and let her know there is nothing injured. She desired me to send her word. It becomes the tea tray very much, and the tea tray the table. I am impatient to have the remainder of the cabinet work brought but think it most probable Twing cannot come till carting. You are apprehensive that I should be disappointed in my looking glass, on the contrary, I am highly pleased and think it the handsomest I have ever seen. It seems too large and too good for the room. Mr. Kent thinks he shall some time own a better house. A joiner assisted yesterday in putting it up. It is done strong and well. I have not as yet felt the want of Hannah. Mrs. Clough is very obliging and holds herself ready to give me any assistance. I cannot use her with the freedom I should a girl of my own, but we have had little to do. The excellent piece of beef and two loaves of bread which we brought from home will last us a great while. Mr. Kent intends sending a horse by Silsby if he will consent to lead one, which he thinks doubtful the going is so extremely bad. Judge Livermore has spent much of his time here. Yesterday he drank tea and made a late evening. We had an excellent little supper of the cold beef, roast potatoes, new butter and Fanny's cheese. I wished Pa was with us to partake of it. He would have relished

the butter and smiled on our peaceful meal. I can procure a chafing dish I believe in this town. Talk does not make them, but a poor man who has no iron. Mr. Kent will supply him when I want one. The roads will prevent our having company for a long time and our family is so small I am afraid to cook. Yesterday I had a meal chest made, a pail and some other convenient articles. I fear I shall want a cup of coffee before I shall get it. Silsby cannot at present bring up the tin. Judge Livermore has this minute come in to tell us his horses are come and he takes his leave tomorrow. He says he shall visit us again in May when he expects to find Rebecca with us. I told Sister Gordon that I had left my receipts and wished you to send them. I have found them in my basket and have not missed anything of consequence except my dropping box. This I want very much and wish it could be forwarded by Silsby. If he cannot bring it Mr. Kent will next week. Remind Charles, my dear Mama, to send us an oration. I have twenty other things to mention, for I know you are not tired of reading any trifles concerning us, but must omit them at present to make tea. Judge L. wishes to engage Rebecca's time and attention.

Our warmest tenderest affection to our dear Papa, love to Fanny, Nancy, Catharine, Eliza. I hope one of them will write. We are anxious to hear everything respecting you, but most of your health.

Ever your affectionate ABIGAIL.

Amos Kent was born at Kent's Island, Newbury, Massachusetts. A graduate of Harvard, he practised his profession of the law at Chester, and in 1814 and 1815 served his adopted State as Senator. He must have been a man of great physical strength, as well as of courage and quick wit, as will be seen from a letter of young William Gordon to his mother, Mrs. West, telling her of an accident whereby the whole Kent family nearly lost their lives, when they broke through the ice of the Merrimac River:

AMHERST, Feb. 26, 1808,

Your friends here, my dear mother, have lately been extremely happy in the company of uncle and aunt Kent, Jane, Sarah, and the four youngest children. Sarah has been here for some weeks; the rest came over Saturday in order to have Sunday with us. Sunday evening the family in all its branches collected in Grandpapa's parlor; and formed a most happy circle. Alas! How checkered is life! Jane tarried with Betsy; Abi. with Catharine. The rest started next morning for Chester. Passing the River, the ice gave way; and they all were thrown into the water. Mr. Kent's great strength and uncommon presence of mind saved all but Sarah; Sarah is in the world of spirits.

The near horse broke in first. In an instant the

sleigh tipt; and they all went in. Sarah, being in front, probably fell under the horse. Mr. Kent struck against and fell over aunt. She retained the infant in her arms, and carried him to the bottom. Mr. Kent made two exertions to get onto the ice; which as often gave way. Then, being exhausted, deprived of hope, and desirous of taking a parting look and farewell of his family; he made an exertion to turn towards them. In this attempt his feet touched bottom. He instantly seized Mrs. Kent, and threw her upon the ice. It broke and she with her child was again immersed. He seized her again and was able to place her on ice which supported her. He then took Mary out. Philip remained. He had just taken hold of him, when assistance came and took him from his grasp. Then by the help of one or two persons he was himself taken out. All this time there was no vestige of Sarah. She was taken up nearly an hour after, falling about twenty feet below. Every exertion to resuscitate her was made; but without effect. No mark of animation was even discovered.

Aunt Spalding and myself went to Chester with them, and attended the funeral. We left them yesterday. They are as well as could be expected, and do not appear to have taken colds.

We are all well. Mrs. Mason and children, Robert Means, and a niece of Mr. Mason's are in town.

I have received your long and excellent letter.

Yours,

WILLIAM GORDON.

Aunt Kent was a woman whose letters kindle a warm feeling of affection and admiration. She carried on an intimate correspondence with her sisters who remained in Amherst, and every letter of hers is full of human interest and gives a vivid picture of her family life. She and her children were frequently at Amherst, and her daughters, especially Abba and Mary, spent much time there with their aunts; indeed of her nine children, Abigail, Mary, and George, as will be seen later in the chronicle, were intimately connected with Amherst. And she herself, after Abigail, who had married Robert Means, Junior, became a widow and bought the old Means house, lived there with her daughter and her son George. For after her husband's death Aunt Kent had been obliged to sell her farm at Chester; and when Abigail Means died she left Amherst and went to live with another daughter, Mrs. McGregor, in Boston, where she died in 1860.

Rebecca Wentworth, the third daughter of Joshua Atherton, was born in August, 1778. In 1806 she was married to Doctor Matthias Spalding. He was graduated from Harvard in 1798, and studied medicine in this country and at Guy's Hospital in London. Doctor Spalding brought with him from London some vaccine which Jenner gave him to be delivered to Doctor Waterhouse of Cambridge. It was in a silver snuffbox inscribed: "From Jenner of the Old World to the Jenner of the New." After

Doctor Spalding's return, he settled in Amherst and was married to Rebecca Atherton the same year. To the end of his long life he was the much loved physician of all the region round about. Of the eight children born to them, only three—Abigail (Cousin Abba), Edward and Alfred—lived to mature years.

Rebecca was evidently a very dear daughter to her father. As I read the letters, I notice that when any member of the family was in trouble, Joshua Atherton sent Rebecca to them as the best thing he had to give them. And, indeed, in all relations of life she filled her place in an almost faultless manner. She was an earnest Christian, a devoted wife and mother, and a kind and friendly neighbor. When she and her husband celebrated their golden wedding, the nieces and nephews voiced their appreciation of what "Uncle and Aunt Spalding" had been to the various branches of the family in the "Address" which follows, while letters from Aunt Eliza Bigelow and Cousin Abba tell us of the festivity itself. Rebecca died at the age of eighty-four, Doctor Spalding at ninety-six; and to the end they lived in the old Spalding homestead in Amherst.

ADDRESS TO UNCLE AND AUNT SPALDING ON THEIR
GOLDEN WEDDING, SEPTEMBER, 16, 1856

Accept, dear and revered friends, the united gifts of your nephews and nieces, on this golden an-

niversary of your wedding day. We wish it were possible for us all to come around you in person, to offer our congratulations.

Not more than one of our number can remember either of you, previous to the union whose fiftieth anniversary we now celebrate. We know you only as our dear Uncle and Aunt Spalding, the friends of our childhood and youth, associated with the love and memory of our parents, and with all our family joys and sorrows. To some of us, the kind Uncle was also the beloved Physician, and the dear Aunt the tenderest of nurses and friends.

How many times have your hospitable doors opened to receive us, and what a treasure of love and respect for your persons and character have we carried with us, wherever our various lots have been cast! Therefore we come today, with joyful united hearts, to bring you our offerings of love, for we feel that your lives have been a blessing to each one of us. It does not become us to offer you our good wishes, nor do you need them; life so spent and so advanced is beyond the reach of failure or accident, and that which should accompany it, "as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends," has long been yours.

God has crowned you with earthly blessings, with long life has he satisfied you, and you serenely await the fulfilment of his last glorious promise, that he will show you his salvation.

May he spare you a little longer to your children

92 AMHERST AND OUR FAMILY TREE

and to us, that we may all see and unite with you in giving thanks for his goodness.

ABBY A. MEANS
MARY M. MCGREGOR
FRANCES G. SMITH
GEORGE KENT
MARY JANE ADAMS
ROBERT MEANS
JAMES MEANS
WM. G. MEANS
NANCY ELLIS MEANS
ELIZA F. BIGELOW
HELEN MCG. NOYES

REBECCA W. UPHAM
WILLIAM GORDON
GEORGE A. FRENCH
CHARLES FRENCH
ANNE ATHERTON
HARRIET NESMITH
JOHN DALTON
CHARLES DALTON
JULIA DALTON
EDWARD DALTON
HENRY DALTON

Aunt Eliza to Aunt Ellis.

BOSTON, Friday evening
Sept. 19th, 1856

My dear Ellis:

I came back from Amherst yesterday after a very pleasant visit. . . . On Tuesday the golden wedding day rose bright and fair. As soon as breakfast was over Geo. Kent took a wagon and carried over the chair, silver bowl and Aunt Kent's bridal cake. He soon came back looking very much pleased and said that he carried all the things into the parlor without seeing anybody, then he went into the kitchen, found Aunt and led her into the parlor and pointed out the boxes, handed her the letter and came right off "manner, very good" he wrote, evidently thinking he had done it up about right. Pretty soon Mr. Davis came over to ask Aunt Kent, Helen & myself over to dinner and Geo. Lucretia, Lu and Annie for the afternoon. We

found Edward, Dora and their children there. The gifts were all spread on the table and Aunt looked beautifully in her chair with a pretty cap on, a present from little Rebecca. Besides what we had sent over was a jar of preserved ginger from Mr. McGregor, a cap from Aunt Mason, a china vase from Jane and a handsome pearl paper cutter from Mary Mason to Uncle. Edward's present was 25 dollars in gold to each and there were two or three other little things. The whole thing was an entire surprise to Uncle and Aunt. Abby had told her mother that she thought some of her friends would be there that day so they had provided a nice dinner and hired an extra woman in the kitchen that Aunt might be at leisure. They were very much gratified. Dear Aunt was very silent all day though she expressed a great deal of pleasure, but it is easy to understand that she could not look back fifty years without some tender thoughts, but Uncle was *beautiful*. Nothing seemed to disturb his pleasure except his amazement that we should have been thinking so much about them. He did not know he had so many friends, he said. And oh, dear Mary Jane, [Aunt Ellis was then living with Aunt Mary Jane] everybody agreed that the crowning beauty of the day was *your letter*. You may be sure that not a word was altered, nobody could read it without tears in their eyes for the charming manner in which you expressed what we all felt. I have kept a copy for my posterity and have given Aunt Kent another at her request. But

to go back while in the midst of a delicious dinner we heard a noise in the front entry and Edward said "there is James" and went out and I heard somebody say "Ri tooral looral lu" and I knew sure enough that James it must be. He had come over from Manchester with Wm., Martha and Willie. They all added to our pleasure, James was just in the right mood. They had taken an early dinner but sat down to eat some exquisite fruit with us. At four o'clock Abby cut the Bridal loaf, a present from Aunt Kent, and gave them a cup of coffee and they went off. After that Charles & Edward Dalton appeared and stayed an hour, and at seven o'clock we all took our leave and left them to rest. I must not forget to mention one happy event, Mr. Davis received a letter from Aunt Nancy saying that she had found her trunk, which gave us all joy. Uncle came over the next morning and when I asked him if he used his bowl for breakfast, he said, "No, that he wanted to, but they would not let him." I advised him to assert his authority the next day and have it, and he said that he would, for he should not have but a little while to use it. This, dear friends, is as good an account as I can give you of this pleasant day. . . . Did you know that I have asked Annie Means to spend the winter with us? And her father and mother seem very much pleased to have her come. She will go to school with Helen and will make a delightful companion for her, I have no doubt. She is at present at Medford having some clothes

made and will come in the last of this week. I felt very much gratified that they would let me have her and I shall do my best to make her happy. . . . It is charming to think that dear Mary Jane will be with us or near us this winter. All the Amherst friends are expecting a long visit from her. She is a *good thing* that we cannot have too much of. A whole winter without household cares cannot be otherwise than a benefit to her. I shall claim a large share of her time for myself. And you dear Ellis will be very happy with Helen, but you won't be tied and I hope you will come on again before the spring.

What a series of misfortunes, dear Aunt Nancy had on her journey. Give my love to her and tell her that I thought they appeared to have enjoyed her stay at Mrs. Stevens' very much. I called there and they quoted her opinions as if she was an oracle. . . .

Your affectionate sister,

ELIZA.

Cousin Abba to Aunt Mary Jane.

AMHERST, Sept. 23, 1856.

My dear Mary Jane,

As I read over the names attached to the letter for the Golden Wedding the wish very naturally arose I would like to write to every one of them, and so I would like to express to each of these dear

friends and cousins the delight and gratification it was to myself to have the occasion made memorable in a way so charming and in every sense so valuable. I may not, probably shall not, write to all but you are one to whom I must write. You are associated farther back than most of these dear ones with Father's and Mother's life and you wrote the letter which so sweetly embodies in beautiful words the sentiments that were the highest charm of the gifts. How very pleasant the manner of doing it was! And the secret was so well kept that the arrival of the articles at the house, the morn of the 16th was nearly as great a surprise to me as to Father and Mother. Is not our dear A. A. M. an admirable diplomat for occasions where the affections are to preside? And that dear Eliza selected the articles is sufficient guarantee of the judgment and good taste with which they are chosen. The bowl, spoon and rings are in daily use.

You know dear, I could not but feel a little anxiety as to how Mother would bear the day and this feeling led me to be cautious in saying much of it beforehand, but I am glad to say she took it very serenely and Father, who has so much more power of living in the present than she, was delightfully exhilarated by it. It was a day that must ever be golden-hued in their memories. . . .

Tell dear Aunt N. we were much relieved to learn the safe arrival of her trunk. I can well understand too the satisfaction she felt with her tastes,

in having a larger wardrobe at command. I hope she will write us again without waiting to hear though we will try to write ere very long. . . .

Very affectionately yours

A. A. D.

Nancy Holland, the fourth daughter of Joshua and Abigail Atherton, was born in 1782, and until 1853 she lived in Amherst. She never married; and when her father died in 1809, she and Elizabeth, the youngest daughter, who was about twenty-three and also at that time unmarried, were left without adequate means of support. Their brother Charles offered them a home, as we may see from a letter to his sister, Aunt Kent.

Uncle Atherton to Aunt Kent.

AMHERST, April 9, 1809.

Dear Sister:

From the known situation of my father, it cannot be unexpected to you to be informed of his death. . . . He left a will in which he has given all his estate to Nancy and Betsy, which I think very just, and hope that after the payment of his debts, there will be something left to save those two sisters from the sense of entire dependence. As long as I have a home they are to consider my house their

home. One of them I shall take as a child. Should both of them keep with me, and they should have property sufficient, I should expect some moderate compensation for the support of one. Should they not have property and should find no other homes more agreeable, they shall find support and protection at my house at all times, without the expectation of any reward except that which follows the performance of duty. They have had a very arduous task, have been most dutiful children, and I doubt not will see happy days.

Your affectionate Brother,

CHARLES H. ATHERTON.

Nancy, accordingly, made her home with her brother and his wife until 1814; and that the arrangement was not entirely happy we may guess from her comment upon its termination. On October 17, 1814, she confides to her Journal: "Left my residence at my brothers, at Mrs. Atherton's desire. It is my opinion and that of my other connexions that it would not be agreeable to her that any of her husbands connexions should reside with them—I have wished to be useful and to contribute to their happiness. That I have not succeeded is my misfortune. Dear objects of my affection Adieu long shall I feel a void. O when will my heart be healed."

Somehow the Diary leads us to sympathize with

Mrs. Atherton. Her husband, in writing the letter to Aunt Kent after his father's death, may have failed to consider that he had a partner without whose assent he could not make a binding contract; and it is easy to understand that conditions between 1809 and 1814 became such that Mrs. Atherton felt that they must have their home to themselves. There is no doubt, however, that the affair rankled in Aunt Nancy's mind. The next entry in her Journal is in August, 1815. "For a long time I have omitted to note Time as it passed. In truth much has been spent in unambitious despondence. I know it wrong—but reflection does not obliterate a sense that I have had more than an ordinary routine of adverse circumstances to weigh upon my heart. The recollection of occurrences for some time sink my spirits and I leave this assurance for the gratification of my friends: that I am not conscious of anything in my conduct or character that could justify the treatment I have received, it has been truly mortifying, truly distressing. I feel there is no dependence on Earth. Come Resignation.

‘Is resignation’s lesson hard
On trial we shall find
It makes us give up nothing more
Than anguish of the mind.’

Why call on Resignation? What have I resigned?
I have resigned the pleasing delusion that good

intentions are a surety for friendship, that industry is a surety for support, that connexions are a surety for protection, that meekness of spirit is a surety for civility; that principle, that prudence, and uniformity cannot ward off jealousy. Oh grave where is thy victory! Oh, death where is thy sting!"

The last word seems to be with Aunt Nancy! This curious old Journal of hers, written after the thrifty manner of the day on odd pieces of paper stitched together with white cotton has been preserved, and some further extracts from it may interest those of us who remember her, and amuse those who do not. I myself am greatly indebted to the Journal and Aunt Nancy's correspondence for a picture of the life then, and there is something quaint and informing in her views of events and of the people by whom she was surrounded. Her very faults contribute to this result. I like her criticisms of her relatives, especially of "Brother."

THE JOURNAL.

December 18, 1812. Rose at five o'clock, scoured my chamber before breakfast. Wrote several hours, went to see the sick, finished making a gown, read none.

Friday, December 19, 1812. Rose at five, read Rollins until eight. Mind clear and cheerful, intend to cultivate it. Wrote four pages. Went to

get Catharine to assist about a gown. She confers benefits cheerfully and agreeably.

The 20th. Arose at six. After making fire in my chamber as *usual* and putting it in order read three-quarters of an hour and to the children half an hour. Wrote most of the day.

Sunday, the 21st. Went twice to meeting and read the rest of the day. Try every day to think of the many blessings I enjoy from an all wise Providence and through the medium of the benevolence of my fellow creatures. Find my mind disposed to be grateful and to form its dispositions from the example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saturday, the 26th. All the past week I have been recording, have made very little mental improvement except to regulate my mind. Truth and simplicity are the standing principles of my conduct, (I think) uniformly. And the ills that assail me with that consciousness, though distressing have some mental alleviation. I am prone to think I am deficient in a proper verbal acknowledgment of favors. I may receive many that I do not duly estimate but I am often restrained by an apprehension that it will seem an indelicate desire to win more. We commend children for their encouragement in doing well but expect a mind having acquired its full powers will be satisfied without

our approbation. This would be the case if all the world reasoned alike and all the world were philosophers.

Sunday, the 27th. Went twice to meeting. Sermon on The Qualities of the Heart. Finished Rollins "Ancient History," from which I have received much amusement and information, and have made some few extracts but I observe they generally lay unread and am not so zealous to make them as some are.

Monday, the 28th. Recorded at Col. M's, evening, wrote nine pages. Did my ironing, washed my chamber. Hemmed four yards and sewed two and a quarter. Satisfied.

Tuesday, the 29th. Wrote eleven pages. Reflected a mind with Christian *self-possession* will neither be ill-natured or overbearing, or will be vulnerable to their effects, and that a mind swollen with its own self-sufficiency neither makes one great nor lovely. Knit the evening with sister Spalding, she advised me to persevere in keeping the journal and to acquaint myself with the politics of the day. Heard a religious discussion between sister M. A. and Mr. Steele. Thought her sentiments rational, him wanting in liberality and information. Thought it absurd to believe it necessary to be what is generally called orthodox for a chance of salva-

tion. Mankind are the children of their passions and it is not unfrequently exercised in their religion.

March 10, 1834. I do not see that I have noted a very agreeable present I had from James last fall, which was a French calico and a pair of gloves, \$6.00; he also gave me \$4.00 for making his four shirts. One-half I told him I could only receive as a present, fifty cents being the ordinary price here. Ann gave me a beautiful bead purse; Mary Jane an indispensable; Eliza and Helen a needle-book. They are delightful as testimonies of interest and affection. From Abbie Kent a turband. F. K. a card case. Silk gloves from N. E. Means.

March 29, 1835. As I frequently receipt for money received in the absence of my brother and have no minutes to show that I pay it over to him I hereby certify that I do uniformly. N. H. Atherton.

March 31, 1837. George Spalding eight days out of New York was killed by a fall on the deck of the ship *Luconia*.

James H. Atherton died of lung fever June 12th. Was not considered in danger of dissolution till ten o'clock the same day. I can scarce make the record from anguish of feeling, that no relative was near. His afflicted father could not have arrived at New

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York till Saturday morning the 17th, James was to be entombed Thursday.

“As those we love decay
We die in part
String after string
Is severed from the heart.”

And thus I feel it. He was born June 23, 1813.

July 6. My brother has given me James' writing desk, which will never be transferred while I live. We have received James' picture, not likeness, taken by Col. Trumbull from recollection. The lower and upper part of the face like him, intermediate unlike.

1839. Went to Boston, New York and Philadelphia for which pleasure I am indebted to Brother, he having paid my expense.

1840, June 22, Monday, left Worcester via Springfield (where we dined) in cars, thence to Hartford in stage. Our fellow travellers were a young English yeoman, a Mr. Thomas who was very entertaining, very loquacious, knew everybody and a little of everything, he has a great memory, and we left him at Hartford to publish reminiscences. We had a fine chamber at the City Hotel. On Tuesday morning, the 23rd, we took a carriage and

rode around the City, were under the shade of the brave old oak, the Charter Oak. The seat of Mrs. Sigourney is very beautifully located, the public buildings very beautiful, principally the Connecticut Free Stone.

July 16, 1841. Went in car to Newburyport, then in stage to Byfield where I spent a delightful week. Went over to Nport. and with Kate and Rebecca partook of ice-cream, and to Mr. Parson's, etc, but nothing is so delightful to me as their affection, I mean the Means. Mrs. Nichols and Miss A. very polite. Frederick a lovely child. Robert Means there.

July 23. Went to Lowell by stage, expense \$1.25, where I had very pleasant visit. Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Smith and Eliza Means there. I rode with Mrs. S. Lawrence, visited Mrs. French and the Miss Osgoods and Judge Harlow. Dined with Mrs. Means where is the seat of hospitality and courtesy.

1842, January 23rd. Went to hear Mr. Maynard who dined with us. I wish he had less vanity and more information. He is nevertheless a worthy man.

February 2nd. Miss Snow, mantamaker, after repeated engagements and keeping me waiting all

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winter refuses to do my work. I am treated very ill by her and cannot, but by experience, realize a disposition so foreign to rectitude, it must have been a design to disappoint and trouble me.

June 29th. Went to Manchester to visit Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Means. They have a beautiful little boy of 22 months. They were all kindness to me but my dear nephew too much absorbed in orthodox theology, which I hope his good sense will soften.

September 26th. This morning died my valued friend and connexion Robert Means, apoplexy. September 28th. His body was interred in the family tomb at this place, attended by numerous friends who took refreshment with us and most of them returned to Lowell. Brother and Mary Ann both returned home. Catharine Means tarried with us to make her last visit before being married.

November 25th. C. Means married to Nehemiah Cleaveland and went to Brooklyn, New York. Ellis and Rebecca with her.

December 5th. Went to Lowell and returned, and had cloak made, ottoman satin. Admire the care Mrs. Means takes of her own mind.

1843, February 28th. Brother and I went to

party at Mr. Pattee's. A fine supper, etc. Some one said his parties were like a chowder, they were mixed.

1845, July. Among my pleasant reminiscences for two months passed is the visit of Mrs. McGregor and her children at her brother George's where her mother still is, and Mrs. Means being with her Aunt Spalding till of late. Housework has been my province till within a week for sometime passed. We could not get help. It is tedious and perfectly hateful to me. How can my friends think it is for my pleasure, and yet they do not even commend my exertions to save them inconvenience. Their appreciation is my only reward, nothing else could reward me.

September 13th. Brother returned from Boston improved in health. Brought me a present of a beautiful new dress. (13 yards at \$.80 a yard \$10.24) which is very agreeable to me, and brought me sundries I had sent for.

In November I was screwing the faucet in the bathing tub and my glasses slipped down the outlet and have not been found.

January 1, 1846. Dined here Dr., Mrs. and Abby, Edward and Dora Spalding, Mr. Davis, G.

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Kent, wife and child. All commended the cooking. I was cook. My dress has been a month in making. Miss Eastman sick.

Feb. 11th. W. Means brought Mrs. Adams to the Doctor's for a visit. I am sick with cold and housework which is my aversion.

July 12th. Since my last date Alfred Spalding has married Rebecca Seaton and with her been to visit her friends. I have been drudging at housework ten days passed. It seems to be my fate to do work I detest.

January 3, 1847. We have had two Irish servants several months who are very good help and I have more leisure and no fatigue of housework.

June 20th, Mr. and Mrs. Mason came to visit Mrs. Means and Kent. He is 79 years of age, and although talkative and pleasant has evidently failed. He went to Hollis to call on Judge Farrar who wants but a few days of one hundred years, and is able to be about. Mrs. Mason is as little changed as any one of her age.

January 26, 1848. Mary Ann said to her father if disease should destroy her life it was her wish to

give me half her property, for I had been a good nurse to her.

June 23. Our travelling friends Mr. and Mrs. Bigelow and Helen and Mrs. Means returned from their European tour. Mrs. Means has given me a pin of the various colors of lava, bought in Rome, cameos and pretty [word omitted]. Mrs Bigelow to whom I had given \$20 to exercise her taste upon brought me a beautiful silk for a dress, and three pairs silk hose. I gave one pair to M. A.

June 28th. Learned that Abby was engaged to Mr. Davis. Mr. and Mrs. and Helen Bigelow came to make us a visit, and Ellis from Orange, New Jersey gone to Manchester. Mrs. J. Aiken is visiting Mrs. Means.

September 26th. Abigail A. Spalding married the Rev. Josiah Gardner Davis. They have gone to Troy, New York and Orange, New Jersey. Present at wedding his sisters, Mrs. Smith and Dr., Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Waters, Rev. Mr. Allen who officiated and lady who made us a visit, Miss Snow, Dr. E. Spalding, lady and child, C. G. Atherton and lady, C. H. Atherton and daughter and sister Nancy, Mr. and Mrs. G. Kent, Mrs. A. Kent and Mrs. Means. All was conducted with great propriety and very pleasant. I wore my parisienne silk dress. Cost silk \$14. Making \$4. muslin lining

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\$1.97 lace, buttons and sewing silk \$3.36 b. holland
\$.51 cord, etc. \$.59, \$10.43.

October. Brother returned from Boston with Dr. Morris' medicine for epilepsy. I see noted in Brother's sheet of expense "Nancy's expense \$.90" what for I do not know. Does he think nothing of my worth, for years I have had no object for self-gratification strong enough to take me for a single night from the care of Mary Ann and Brother and I receive nothing but my board. How can he be so particular? It is wrong!

March 22, 1850. The 17th of this month I was sixty-eight years of age. The winter has passed happily with me in the main. Though I could wish to be less confined and have more variety. Brother and Mary Ann have been unusually well. Heaven grant their good health may continue.

April. I am now sixty-eight years of age and so far now retain my powers that I read much aloud, and have just made four linen shirts for Brother. God grant my powers may continue!

January 1, 1851. Dr. and Mrs. Spalding, Mr. and Mrs. Davis, James and William G. Means and ladies, George Kent and lady, Dr. E. Spalding and lady, Dr. Fitch and D. A. Fletcher dined with us.

That Nancy bore no lasting grudge to Mrs. Atherton is shown by the letter she wrote to Sister Spalding after Mrs. Atherton's death in 1817:

CHARLESTOWN, Oct. 27th, 1817

Monday P. M.

My dear Rebecca:

Last Monday we received a letter from Brother giving information that our valuable sister was no more. It was an event we had every reason to expect and ought not to wish suspended while she was subject to so much suffering, yet I am truly grieved and afflicted. Not that I doubt she is happy but that I feel our loss is great. She was an enlightened, a firm and discriminating companion. She was an attentive nurse, an irreproachable wife. She was a mother whose uniformity, zeal and perseverance for the best interest of her children (their wisdom and goodness) were not to be thwarted by sickness, fatigue or any ordinary occurrence and if the departed are ministering spirits to those left behind, may it be her reward to know the seed she has cultivated with so much assiduity has flourished, has enriched, has expanded, made the world wiser and better and in due time a harvest, meet for the kingdom of the just, made perfect.

For our ever dear Brother I have the most heartfelt sympathy and thank him sincerely for his kindness in writing. His time and his mind must be

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engrossed and by writing to him I ought not often to make claim to his attention, but everything relative is interesting and I hope some of you, my dear sisters, will often let me hear and quiet my anxiety. Have his children returned? And are not Charles and George overpowered with affliction, they are new to sorrow. Give them my love. . . .

I shall go to Windsor with Susan this week as she would be greatly disappointed if I did not and I hope to be amused, but I do not much expect it. We have been engaged a fortnight and I fear to find bustle and company when I long to be quiet. I have determined not to get me a pelisse as it would probably be spoiled in the making here. I shall not want money (tell Catharine) for the present. She did think of coming to see us, I sincerely hope she will. Give my best love to them and the sweet children. Your husband and children share largely in my affections. I wish Betsy would write me a very circumstantial letter about you all (she has not written me a line) of Brother and his family.

In haste, your very affectionate sister

NANCY H. ATHERTON.

More than ten years after Mrs. Atherton's death, Nancy again made her home with "Brother" and remained until his death in 1853. She then accepted the invitation of her niece, Aunt Helen

Noyes, and her husband to live with them in New York during the winters; and the summers she spent with her relatives in New England. She died in New York on November 9, 1859.

Like her brother Charles, Nancy was a Unitarian; and it will be observed in her Journal that she speaks of my father as too much devoted to the orthodoxy of his religion. I have seen a letter to her from her nephew James Means in which he pointed out to her with affectionate firmness that unless she forsook her Unitarian belief, she could not hope to be saved; and the following letters of Aunt Nancy and the Reverend Mr. Mott may give some idea of the way the good people of those days indulged in religious controversy:

August 30th, 1826.

Miss Atherton,

I most sincerely regret that under an excitement, which a discussion such as we were this afternoon engaged in never fails to produce, I should have used language calculated to wound your feelings—I ask your pardon, and hope that all feelings condemned by that Saviour about whose character we so essentially differ may be eradicated from both our hearts. We differ: for the future, therefore, let us agree to differ, but let us be friends. We may respect and be friendly to each other, though we may condemn each other's

opinions. At least the spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his, would naturally lead us to this. I am sorry for having offended you, and still more for having offended God by giving way to an improper temper even in what I must now consider the defence of truth.

Very respectfully,

THOS. S. W. MOTT.

August 30th, 1826.

Mr. Mott,

Feeling is implanted in our nature and cannot be wrong under proper discipline. So much as either of us have erred in that respect we were faulty and should seek forgiveness thro our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I could not wish you to adopt any opinion that your understanding and your heart would not justify—and I believe when you are fully acquainted with the tenets of the Unitarians you will not say “they hold nothing—essential to Christianity.” I think you would not willingly bound the benevolence of the Almighty to your own peculiar sect. I do not suppose it depends on church government or speculative opinions—but on the heart—and I believe it the duty of every intelligent being to be persuaded in their own minds—to worship with the heart and with the understanding—and mine

has induced me to adopt the views I profess. They are not less sincere than yours.

If I have anything to pardon (after this long letter) you have it with all my heart—and I sincerely reciprocate the wish for your friendship.

Permit me to thank you for the pleasure I have received from Southey's Book of the Church, which I return, and accept the esteem and good wishes of

N. H. ATHERTON.

Aunt Nancy had a rather suspicious nature and was disposed to think that she was not being treated with consideration by her relatives; and in later life she took a somewhat pessimistic view of human nature—especially the masculine half of it. As a child I remember her occasional visits to us when we were living at Manchester, and a certain look of watchfulness on my dear mother's face lest her irrepressible brood should in some way offend. I especially remember one occasion when, a schoolgirl of fourteen, I had the responsibility of convoying Aunt Nancy from Worcester to Lancaster. I was on my way to Manchester, via Nashua, and she was intending to visit some friends in Lancaster. When we arrived at that station, she resolutely declined to leave the car because she was convinced that it was not the right place. It did not look as it did when she visited Lancaster before, she averred. I assured her that it was

Lancaster, and that there was but one Lancaster on our route. But arguments from a person of my age to a person of hers were of no avail. She would not budge. And I was obliged to appeal to the conductor for help to get her off the train. Certainly Aunt Nancy possessed strength of character, and a personality that one could not forget.

Catharine, the fifth daughter of Joshua Atherton, was born June 7, 1784, and died at Amherst on January 17, 1838. On January 12, 1808, she married David McGregor Means, the second son of Robert Means. They were my grandparents, and from them come all the cousins who claim the Means and Atherton descent.

Elizabeth Willard, the sixth daughter and youngest child of Joshua Atherton, was born in Amherst on May 4, 1786. She was married to the Hon. Ralph H. French on May 18, 1820, and lived thereafter in Marblehead and Salem until they removed to Manchester, New Hampshire, where they resided with their son George until their death.

Elizabeth was the daughter who, with her sister Nancy, was unmarried at the time of their father's death. But the temper and disposition of her mind were more happy and genial than that of Nancy. She was less given to introspection and more warmly appreciative of kindness shown her

by her relatives. She was an excellent cook, and as a child I remember the pleasure with which we received an invitation to tea from Aunt French. Her husband was a handsome man with courtly manners, and he was the last person I ever saw who wore a ruffled shirt.

As I think of the daughters of Joshua Atherton, each one with her special characteristics seems to stand out in her individual place like the women I know to-day. There was Aunt West, with her nervous temperament but warm and hospitable heart; Aunt Spalding with her steadfastness, which made her the one who was as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land when trouble came to any of them; Aunt Kent, whose personality so shines out in her letters—practical, helpful, humorous, occupied with the many affairs of her large family, but not the less interested in her sisters and their children. The reader feels drawn into intimate acquaintance with her and a deep interest in her affairs. She was full of the milk of human kindness, and all her acts and thoughts have the charm of her mother wit and kindly wisdom. And Aunt Nancy, whose idiosyncrasies are clearly revealed in her letters and especially in her Journal. My grandmother, Catharine, with her nine children who were lively enough to absorb most of the time and attention of their mother, was never very strong, but managed, nevertheless, to fill a large place in the affections and affairs of

her sisters and their husbands. And there was Elizabeth, Aunt French, the youngest of the six, whose cheerful and appreciative comments on "Brother" and especially on their brothers-in-law stood out in contrast to Aunt Nancy's strictures on the men of the family, as will be seen by her letter written to Nancy when she was staying at Aunt West's in Charlestown:

CHARLESTOWN, August 4, 1815.

Dear Sister Nancy,

Your letter of 28, which I received on 3d gave me much pain, that you had not heard from me. I expected William would have written to you by Gibs, he left us the day before sister set out for the springs, which was week before last on Thursday, as you will see in my letter to sister S. and at that time I was unable to write. Thank God, it is not so now! My health is in a measure restored, and I am again a little like other folks, able to walk out to my neighbors and have made several visits, returning home early, nor was I void of pleasure in Mr. West's absence. My neighbors were constantly calling and from them I received every attention that heart could wish. I believe there has been no nice cooking in town that I have not had a slice of since I have been able to eat. To quote Silkman, "they are the best, or some of the best, of good people, who seem to receive

an obligation by bestowing it, and to give one a new claim to their kindness by having already conferred it in the most liberal manner." My heart as you will suppose is full of gratitude, and I regret that I possess no other means of returning their kindness, nor is it to the Charlestown people alone that my heart is extended with gratitude and affection. My friends in Amherst claim a large share which can never be obliterated from my earnest sense of gratitude, and your proffered kindness, dear Nancy, claims most grateful acknowledgment. But believe me dear sister, it would grieve me very much to take from you a partical of the property that is so necessary to your ease and comfort. Dear, good and more than good, Mr. West, bids me give his love to you, and tell you he begs to have the liberty of supplying me with everything I want while with him. . . .

Such kindness, dear Nancy, demands our liveliest gratitude, to the disposer of everything, that he has bestowed on our married sisters, husbands that are so kind and affectionate, and that consult their comfort as far as lays in their power. Nor is this all, how very, very much they contribute to your and my happiness. How destitute we should be without their affectionate care and benevolence. . . .

I am very glad to hear you are so cheerful and happy—and beg of you not to indulge in unpleasant feelings, excited by the incidents of life. It is a morbid sensibility, very detrimental to our better

feelings. But you may say how can I get rid of this that is constantly with me? I answer that you must avert every unpleasant thought that arises in your mind, as a usurper that has taken the highest seat, when the lowest was too good for him, at the same time inviting those that partake of every good and cheerful virtue. This will exclude unpleasant sensations, give a continued happy countenance and in time materially improve the character. Now let me beg of you not to laugh at my morality. . . .

Tell Betsy I feel anxious to hear from her and hope she will gratify me by giving an account of herself immediately. Do tell her my poetical genius has been so long in oblivion sent there some time since by a northern *blast* as she will recollect, if she looks back to the stormy evening I spent with her a few evenings before I was taken sick in Sister Sp.'s absence at Boston, I am sorry to say the power of the sun's rays has not been able to shed through the door of oblivion one glimpse to cheer this most valuable plant. Alas! I fear it will be lost to this world forever. Only by her own fascinating power she can open a crack or pierce through the door some pointed instrument that the sun's rays may again inspire it with life and animation.

Be so good as to look at my muff. I fear it is not secure.

I had a charming letter from W. last week. He is well and I believe truly good. My paper is

covered and I have only room to tell you all my dear sisters and brothers how much I love you. This from your affectionate sister,

E. W. ATHERTON.

CHAPTER V

SECOND GENERATION: MEANS.

Of the six children of Robert Means, the eldest, Thomas, as has been intimated, left Amherst when a very young man, and never returned. A letter written to him after he went away was addressed to Bordeaux; but in 1821, when he was forty-six years old, he died in Georgia, and was buried there.

Mary, the next in age to Thomas, born in 1777, was married in 1799 to the Hon. Jeremiah Mason, a distinguished lawyer of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. There they lived until 1832 when they removed to Boston, and lived on Tremont Street, not far from the Lawrences. The genealogical tables show that only three of their nine children, Robert Means, Charles, and Mary Ann left descendants. The letters written by Polly Means, as she was called, were full of the innocent joy of youth, and pleasure in her beaux, her clothes, her partners at balls. The letters written in later life are full of the gentleness and kindness which were her personal characteristics, but they lack the appeal of the early ones which gave a charming picture of a pretty and popular girl of the day. These letters were unfortunately destroyed by one of her daughters, but the following verses are preserved for our pleasure:

LETTERS

Letters alone the power of time control,
 And to the lure of virtue bend the soul,
 A long hereafter claims the deathless page,
 Improved in credit as improved in age.

Our late descendants hence a race unknown
 Shall make the world's past knowledge all their
 own,
 For wide the mute instructor spreads, nor fears
 The tyrants' edict or the waste of years.

 VIRTUE.

Virtue, the chiefest beauty of the mind,
 The noblest ornament of human kind.
 Virtue, our safeguard and our guiding star
 That stirs up reason when our senses err.

POLLY MEANS, AMHERST, 1789.

Except for visits to her parents, Mrs. Mason's connection with Amherst ceased at the time of her marriage. In the Life of her husband, the following tribute is paid to her: "On the sixth day of November, 1799, Mr. Mason married Miss Mary Means, daughter of Colonel Robert Means, of Amherst, N. H. This proved a union of rare happiness, securing to him what a hard-working lawyer so much needs, the life-long blessing of a happy home. Mrs. Mason was a woman of excellent un-

derstanding, of much gentleness of character, and winning manners. Her husband was never so happy as under his own roof. Often obliged to leave home in obedience to the calls of public or professional business, he always had an assurance that during his absence his household would be watched over with the most judicious and affectionate care. He was given to hospitality, and Mrs. Mason received and entertained his guests with a simple and graceful welcome, which was the natural expression of a kind heart and an amiable temper."

After the death of Jeremiah Mason, Daniel Webster said in an eulogy pronounced before the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts: "Of my own professional discipline and attainments, whatever they may be, I owe much to that close attention to the discharge of my duties, which I was compelled to pay for nine successive years, from day to day, by Mr. Mason's efforts and arguments at the same bar. The characteristics of his mind, as I think, were real greatness, strength and sagacity. He was great through strong sense and sound judgment. His career was marked by uniform greatness, wisdom and integrity." And Rufus Choate, in an address moving the resolutions adopted at a meeting of the Suffolk County Bar, said of Mr. Mason: "In a profound knowledge of jurisprudence, far reaching discernment and sound judgment, and in some of the most choice qualities of a forensic speaker he had in this whole

country few equals, and probably no superior. His powers of mind were not only so vast, but so peculiar; his character and influence were so weighty, as well as good; he filled for so many years so conspicuous a place in the profession of the law, in public life, and in intercourse with those who gave immediate direction to public affairs, that it appears most fit that we should attempt to record somewhat permanently and completely our appreciation of him, of whom it may be said that, without ever holding a judicial position, he was the author and finisher of the jurisprudence of a state; one whose intellect, wisdom and uprightness gave him a control over the opinions of all the circles in which he lived and acted, of which we shall scarcely see another example, and for which this generation and the country are the better to-day."

Elizabeth, the second daughter of Robert Means, was born in 1779, and in 1800 married the Reverend Jesse Appleton of Hampton, who afterwards became the President of Bowdoin College. When she was a girl Elizabeth seems to have enjoyed the frivolous pursuits of the other young ladies of the town; but in later life she devoted herself solely to the severer aspects of her religion and to contemplation of the awful fate of those who died without due preparation for the judgment of God. She was a good and earnest woman, but she seems to have lacked a saving sense of

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humor and the charity which covereth a multitude of sins. Six children were born of this marriage, of whom the third daughter married Franklin Pierce, and was lady of the White House during his Presidency. The fifth child, Robert, married his cousin Rebecca Wentworth Means, and thereby forged another link binding the two families of Atherton and Means. President Appleton died in 1819, and in 1820 Aunt Appleton returned, with her young family, to Amherst where her father established her in what was then called the "Farm." There she lived until her children were married when she went for a time to her eldest daughter, Mary, who had married John Aiken of Lowell. She died in Boston in 1844.

David McGregor, the second son, and fourth child, of Robert and Mary McGregor Means, was born September 28, 1781. Owing to the early departure from Amherst of his elder brother, Thomas, the duties of an eldest son fell upon him. In 1808 he married Catharine, the fifth daughter of Joshua Atherton, thus uniting the two families from whom we are descended. They established themselves in the large frame house which was opposite the side of Robert Means's house on the road to Danforth's Corner and next the old cemetery. Here their nine children were born, and here all the children lived until after the death of their parents, and the marriage of the eldest daughter,

Mary Jane, in 1839.

David was associated with his father in the "Store," and then, after the latter's death, carried on the business alone as long as he lived. The old Store stood at one side of his father's house, and to-day there are some cobble-stones which must mark the front of it. The Means house, which is now owned by Mrs. Carruth, was built by Robert in 1785; but I cannot tell whether the Store was there earlier or not. As Robert came to Amherst in 1774, the probability is that he lived during those intervening years on the "Farm" which he later lent to his daughter Elizabeth Appleton after her husband's death. There seems to be room for discussion as to the removal of the Store. Mrs. Locke, in her story of "Colonial Amherst," says that in 1863 the Store, with other buildings, was destroyed by fire. It is, of course, possible that wherever the Store was moved, it was burned in 1863; but it was not burned in the place it occupied in the days of Robert and David Means. On the other hand, Mrs. Robert Means, Junior, who took over the place in the early eighteen-forties, records the removal in a letter to her brother-in-law, Amos Lawrence of Boston:

AMHERST, Sept. 6, 1846

Saturday Morning

My dear Brother:

Your joint letter, my dear friends, proved the

most welcome of four which awaited my return last evening. I felt almost sure of finding this refreshment and the sight of the yellow envelope directed in my dear sister's well known hand made my heart glow. I am thankful this warm weather has proved so favourable to her cold and that you by means of good care and cold water have passed through it so comfortably. Since the fourth of the month the weather here has been warmer than I have ever known it and without one alleviating shower, the Plain is quite dried and looks a russet brown, and the gardens are all suffering, but the shady trees about this house and the perfect quiet of the place enable us to be very comfortable for the present.

You will, I hope, be pleased to hear that the "old store" has moved off with becoming gravity leaving behind a good character for stability and what is not agreeable a large cellar to be filled up with something solid, and here one of your late commentaries on the practise of filling up with perishable material has been of great use to me and I reject all proposals to throw in tan which "they say" will fill up fast and be much cheaper. We look in great confusion here on that side of the house, but the prospect is greatly improved and I am sure when well over, I shall think it worth all the trouble. The carpenters from New Boston are expected this week, but I do not think the whole will be finished before October so few people are prompt. You see, my dear friend, how much I

presume on your interest for me, in giving you all these details, encourage me by following my example and writing to me of your daily incidents. I hope dear Mary Jane is with you now, she will have much comfort in talking with you of dear Catharine, whose *resting place* I can see from my window. May all who have sowed there in tears, reap in joy at the great day of the resurrection.

Remember me to Robert Appleton and Dr. Lawrence. I hope the latter will be able to cure Freddy of his troubles which have given Mary Jane some anxiety. I shall send this by sister Lucretia who goes with her little girl on Monday, to visit Mrs. McGregor. If you will take her to the Blind Asylum on one of your bright mornings it will give the child a great pleasure and *thus be all in your way*. My mother desires her love to you with many grateful expressions for your kind message to her.

This chat with you, my dear Mr. Lawrence, is taking all my paper so adieu for the present, your

Affectionate A. A. MEANS.

The home life of David and Catharine was a very happy one. Their nine children grew up about them and all outlived their parents, and there is abundant record of the family in Catharine's numerous letters to her sisters. We have no portrait of her, but from what I have learned from her children—my father and his sisters and brothers

—she was a woman of slight build, with dark eyes and dark complexion. She was somewhat delicate in health, and for many years before her death was the victim of a headache every week on Sunday. As she was a deeply religious woman and a loyal member of the church in Amherst, this illness must have been a great trial to her, although it furnished a text for irreverent comment among her grandchildren when they wished to evade their duty on Sundays—"Sunday-sickness" was what they termed the well-known malady. Catharine died in Amherst on January 17, 1838, the same day on which the body of her mother-in-law, Mary McGregor Means, was buried. When her husband, David, died in 1835 a notice of him appeared in the "Cabinet" which gives as clear an idea of him as we are able to get:

Col. David Mac Gregor Means, whose death was noticed in the last Cabinet, was the son of the Hon. Robert Means, late of Amherst, deceased. He succeeded to his father's business as a merchant in this place, and continued it until the time of his lamented death. While we now would not repine at the mysterious behests of Providence, ample occasion is here found for contemplating the insecurity of human life in its most promising and useful aspects. With a firmness of constitution, a health and activity rarely to be met with among men, with a wife and a large family of young children, who needed his care and protection; with an aged mother whose almost sole dependence was

on him for the care of her affairs; with everything about him to make his connection with the living happy, useful and desirable, the angel of death, while he was yet in vigor of manhood and in the midst of his usefulness, has been commissioned to call him to other scenes. We bow with submission and reverence before this dark dispensation; and while we distrust not its benevolence or its wisdom, we feel how powerless we are when we try to fathom it.

The most prominent traits in the character of Col. Means, were his *independence* of thought, expression and action, and a generous and lofty spirit, a noble and chivalrous bearing in all his conduct, a kind disposition, and an affectionate heart. Pure in his moral character, and honorable in all his motives and feelings, there was nothing which more excited his indignation than the exhibition in others, of any thing like trick, meanness, or littleness. No man was ever more decided or open in his opinions and conduct; yet there was a magnanimity about him that disarmed resentment and he made no enemies.

He represented his native town in the Legislature of the state, two years in succession, when he declined a re-election. It was unpleasant to him to be away from his family and business. Peculiarly domestic in his habits, public station offered no sufficient inducements to give up, even for a short period, the endearments of his home. When, however, his obligations as a citizen called him forth,

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we have often seen him, the foreman of our juries, both petit and grand. The solidity and uprightness of his character were well known to our courts and through the country. His death is not only a severe affliction to his family and a large circle of relatives and friends, it has also diffused a general sorrow.

After it was ascertained that he could not survive his disease, he submitted with the utmost calmness and resignation to the divine will. He was impatient to be gone. The only expressions of regret which escaped from his lips were that what he felt the most difficult to be resigned to was his leaving *so excellent a wife*, such affectionate children, and an aged mother to whom he had hoped to be a comfort and support as long as she lived. Blessed Spirit! that wife now thy widow, those children and that mother, so long as their memories shall endure, will *never* forget thy affection and kindness to them. He departed with the most cheering trust in that mercy which is the foundation of the Christian's hope.

Nancy, the third daughter and fifth child of Robert, was born in 1783, and in January, 1816, was married to Judge Caleb Ellis of Claremont. He died in May of the same year, and in 1821 she married Amos Lawrence of Boston. He, also, had been married before, and was already the father of two sons and a daughter by his first marriage.

Nancy bore him two children, Mary and Robert. The little girl died when she was about six years old; Robert, a boy of great promise, died at the age of nineteen while a student at Harvard. Doctor Robert Means Lawrence, a grandson of Amos Lawrence, who was named for this young uncle by marriage, has most kindly allowed me the use of many letters written to his grandfather by his second wife and her family and connections. Through these letters we become more intimately acquainted with him than we could ever be by the published life of him which reposes peacefully on our library shelves: for these are the letters of those who had shared his love and the benefits that his love had prompted his generous soul to bestow.

Those who read the letters contained in this volume must, I think, be struck with "bundles" as a means of communication. The parents of children away at school or college were perpetually sending them bundles containing articles of dress, perhaps a book or two, and possibly something to tempt their appetite. Parcels-post was happily unknown in those days, and bundles passed to and from all points of the compass by stage. They were a favorite medium, also, of transporting letters: postage was high, postage-stamps had not come in, so no one with a frugal mind would think of missing so excellent an opportunity of doubling the value of the bundle by including the precious missive. Uncle Lawrence was a great sender of bundles, and I can remember the excitement in

our family on the arrival of one of these tokens of his affectionate thought of us. It is true that sometimes the pieces of prints, calico, or gingham which he sent caused a somewhat inscrutable expression on the maternal face; but there were many other things in the bundles, such as books and household utensils, and always tracts. I remember a whole library of small black books called, I think, the "Home and School Library," which I devoured with avidity, although the only book which I now remember was entitled "The Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man." The sender was neither.

Uncle Lawrence died suddenly on the last night of 1852, as will be seen from a letter of Aunt Mary Jane's. Sometime after his death Aunt Ellis went to live with Aunt Lawrence and was a member of the household until Aunt Lawrence died in 1866—the last survivor of her generation.

Aunt Mary Jane to Her Husband and Sister.

January 5th, 1853 BOSTON
Tremont St. Wednesday Afternoon

This is the first time I have had for writing dear husband and sister since the hasty letter written on Friday morning. I have been here ever since and shall remain until tomorrow further than that I do not know but intend to take some opportunity to talk with Aunt L about it, to see if she would prefer to have me remain a little longer now, or

come again after I have made my visit to Rebecca. I should be glad to do what would give most comfort to our dear afflicted friend.

I have seen so many people within the few last days, my dear friends, that I feel quite confused and hardly know how to go back to the time when you left me. I am writing now in dear Uncle's chamber—not at his table for as yet no one has used that place so sacred to him, but at the writing desk in the book case on the other side of the fireplace. Aunt is not here; she still keeps her place in the nursery as being more retired and where she can secure to herself more absolute privacy than in this apartment so long the resort of this great family circle. I think it was on Saturday afternoon that Mr Sam'l Lawrence proposed to have the funeral at Brattle Street Church, he said it was much urged and that a multitude of persons who wished to pay the last honours to their friend and benefactor would be deprived of the opportunity if it should be at the house. Aunt consented without reluctance I think, in case Mr Lathrop approved of it for it is generally understood here, I find, that Unitarian clergymen are opposed to having funerals in churches.

On Sunday I went to church (St. Paul's) in the morning when I heard one of the most beautiful sermons I ever listened to, from Dr. Vinton. You know he never preaches funeral sermons, but on New Years day he mentions every person who has died in the congregation during the past year. It

was full of allusions many of which I did not understand, but as he closed he paid the most beautiful tribute to our dear Uncle. He said he was not one of us it is true, but he was most nearly connected with some who are, and in one sense he belonged to us as he did to all the world. "When the ear heard him it blessed him, when the eye saw him it consented thereto." I will try to bring you a copy of the sermon which Aunt hopes to borrow as she did not hear it. Almost every clergyman in the city mentioned it in the same manner, all claiming a right in one who loved and blessed all mankind, and several concluding with the same words as Dr. Vinton "On whom shall his mantle fall?" In the afternoon I did not go to church nor did Rebecca or Freddy who both came in, in the morning. Aunt had on the whole the most quiet day she has had since his death, this was peculiarly agreeable to her. The Mr. Lawrences (sons & brothers) were all in it is true but few others. On Monday she had to see many people all connexions it is true, but you know how immense this family circle has got to be. She is composed and takes evident pleasure in talking about him and even those very things which sometimes annoyed are now a source of pleasure to her, such as the children crowding round his carriage in the streets. Everybody was full of it, and Abby Means, Mary Mason, Mary Aiken and myself were spoken to about it when we went down into Washington Street to buy mourning articles, they seemed to

have an instinct to whom we belonged. Monday afternoon Pres. Hopkins and Prof. Packard arrived. Aunt seemed heartily glad to see them and insisted on their staying at the house. Mary Aiken came down on Monday and returned the same day and came again yesterday. No one slept in the house (friends I mean) except myself until Monday night when Dr. Hopkins & Mr. Packard were here. You will wonder dear Ellis what I did all this time. I was trying all the time not to be "in the way or out of the way." The brothers and other friends expressed their thanks that I stayed in the house more than once. I could do little but see that dear Aunt had some undisturbed time, that too many people did not go up at once and some times to sit down to talk and weep with her. No one seemed to think of staying over night. Aunt Kent has been quite unwell with a severe cold and I see they feel no small anxiety about her, though without any particular cause except her age and increasing infirmity. Ever since the first day there has been a constant stream of people passing up into the front chamber where the dear remains were laid, to give a last look at their friend and benefactor. These people have been of all ranks in society from the highest to the servants, mechanics and others who *served* him or whom he had *served*. Perfect quiet was maintained through all this and not a sound was heard in the house except the ringing of the door bell.

The friends assembled here yesterday at eleven,

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the two parlours were full, the coffin being in the front one. Dr. Vinton read the scriptures used in the church service on such occasions and then made an extemporaneous prayer, after which we went to Brattle Street Church in carriages. The coffin was placed under the pulpit and Dr. Sharpe made the first prayer after which the children of the Lawrence Association who were seated on each side of the pulpit went up to the coffin and laid wreaths of flowers upon it while they sang a hymn. This was quite unexpected and was very touching. The church was entirely full, galleries and all and it was with some difficulty that we got into our carriages at the door. Mr. Lathrop made a long prayer and President Hopkins pronounced the benediction, it was a bitter day, but the procession was very long and they were obliged to stretch a rope across the head of Brattle Street to keep out the crowd drawn together on the outside, I suppose by curiosity, and a desire to see Mr. Pierce. I got out for a few moments at Mount Auburn, Aunt did not, it was too bitterly cold. Robert Means, Eliza, Freddie and I went together. Mr. B. had an appointment at Clinton which he could not forego on the last day. Elizabeth was here, Robert, Wm., all the Aikens but the youngest children Mr. Pierce and Jane and the Lawrences of three generations.

M. J. A.

Robert, born in 1786, the third son of Robert and Mary, and their youngest child save three who died

in infancy or early youth, seems to stand like the Apocrypha, even like John the Baptist, between the old and new dispensations. He, with Aunt French on the Atherton side, was the youngest of our second generation, and for his second wife he married into our third generation. He was graduated in 1807 from Bowdoin College and after reading law with his brothers-in-law Jeremiah Mason and Charles H. Atherton, he established himself in practice at Amherst. There he built a most attractive house, to which he brought his wife, Mary E. Dinsmore, of Keene, and where they lived until her death in 1830. He then sold the house to Mr. Barnabas B. David, whose daughter, Mrs. George W. Nichols, was born in the house and still lives there.

In reading the letters, we realize that Robert Means was not very happy in Amherst after his wife's death, and that he welcomed the opportunity to give up his profession and become the agent of a mill at Lowell, where he moved in 1831. And in 1834 he married Abigail A. Kent, a daughter of the Honorable Amos Kent of Chester and a granddaughter of Joshua Atherton, a second alliance between the two families. They lived in Lowell until his death in 1842, when his wife bought the Robert Means home in Amherst, where she lived during the summer and where she died. All that I can learn of Robert Means, Junior, is shown in the letters printed in this volume.

Of the three daughters of Robert Means my impressions are less vivid than of my great-aunts on the Atherton side of the family. I do not remember that I ever saw Aunt Mason, the eldest, but once. I must have been about ten years old when my father took me in to see her; but the visit is memorable to me because she gave me a book of Miss C. M. Yonge's called "Richard the Fearless, or the Little Duke," a story that I read so often that it was at last literally read to tatters. And years after, when in advanced middle age I was travelling through Normandy, and saw in the cathedral in Rouen the sepulchre of Richard's father, William of the Long Sword, I recalled vividly the boy standing there beside his father's bier and laying one hand on the sword and raising the other to heaven, as he swore to avenge his father's murder. Truly, that little book kindled an interest in history in my childish mind, and for that I bless Aunt Mason. After her marriage Aunt Mason was not often in Amherst, and I have no record of her life beyond the references to her in the life of her husband, and a very few of her letters which do not intimately reveal her, excellent as they are. But I love her for the gay letters of her youth, which are no more. She was a little woman, and could not readily reach her tall husband's arm, so she used to knot her handkerchief around it in order to walk arm-in-arm with him. Her descendants are many, and their names show the honor in which they are held; among they

are our cousins Ida and Ellen Mason and Mrs. Winthrop; the Olivers, the Derbys, and the Stocktons; the Masons, the Grays, and the Crafts.

Aunt Lawrence, whose photograph with three of her nieces and my aunts, I have reproduced here, I can easily recall. I must have been about twenty-three when she died, and I had often been in her house to visit my Aunt Ellis, her namesake, who, during the last years of her life, lived with her. Aunt Lawrence was at that time an invalid, and did not come downstairs to luncheon. I was always asked to go up to her room to see her; but it would never have occurred to me to treat her as the young treat their elders now. She must have had a lively mind in her younger days, as is shown by her letters to her husband; but I think her great sorrows in the loss of her two children and of her husband had intensified the natural reserve with which then the years seemed to separate the old and the young. She was full of kindness for us, however, and I think we regarded her with a grateful affection, though we did not arrive at any intimacy.

I never saw Aunt Appleton, as she died when I was a baby, but I seem to know her more intimately than her sisters, probably because I knew and dearly loved her daughter, Mrs. Aiken, and became intimate with her two granddaughters, Mary, Mrs. Ripley, and Jane, Mrs. Snow, who now lives, as she has for many years, in Kansas; their brother, General William Aiken, is also my good

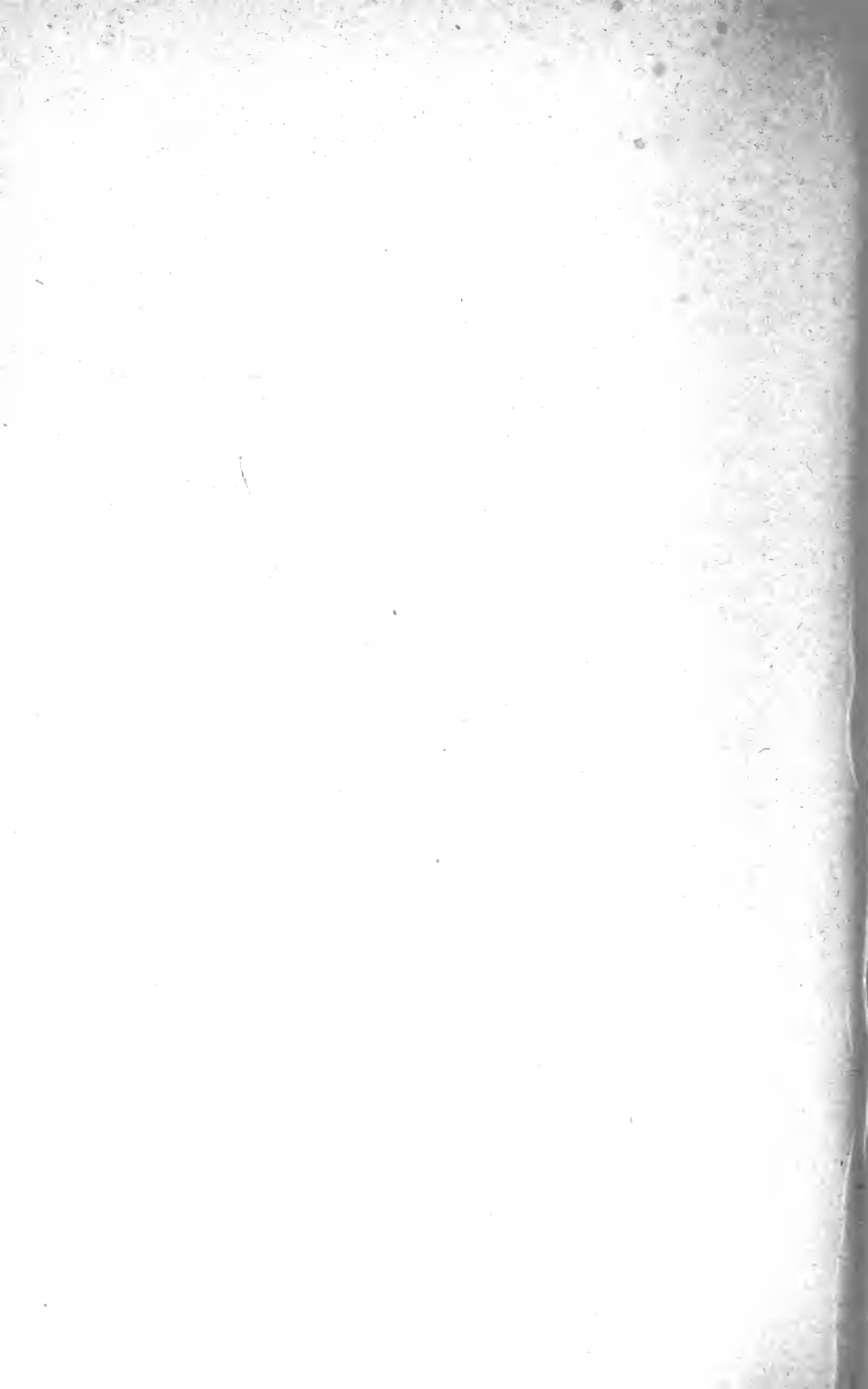
friend and cousin. Aunt Appleton was, like her mother, of stern religious faith, nor could she soften her opinions to suit the new generation's more open mind; but she was a good and earnest woman, and as one reads her letters one realizes how much her limitations deprived her of the joy of life. She undoubtedly believed in the "goodness and severity of God," but she laid undue emphasis, perhaps, on the severity, and considered it her duty to emulate it. She brought up her children as her conscience dictated, and there is no denying that the results were good. But, in her sternness, she lost not so much the love that was her due as the free confidence that her daughter Mary happily received from her children.

Not long ago I was interested in observing on a page of the "Sunday Herald" depicting distinguished bank presidents of Boston that three of them were direct descendants of Robert Means the first. Two were great-grandsons of Elizabeth Appleton, and one of Mary Mason. There are many equally honorable men, and women not a few, who are descendants of each and both families; but these others did not happen to be in a Sunday paper!

In genealogical tables it is not difficult to separate one generation from another, but in writing the story of a family the generations refuse to be separated, for in the concerns of their lives they are constantly mingling. Joshua Atherton's surviving son, Charles Humphrey, and two of



AUNT LAWRENCE AND HER NIECES



his daughters, Rebecca Spalding and Catharine Means, had their homes in Amherst as long as they lived. There their children were born and brought up; there came the cousins from Chester and elsewhere to visit. The unmarried daughter of Joshua, "Aunt Nancy," also spent most of her life at Amherst, although she was much with Sister West in Charlestown and Sister Kent in Chester. Their own letters best tell the story of the two families, parents and children,—Aunt Kent's letters that are always full of human interest; the letters of Catharine Means and her nine children. "But time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak,"—Aunt Spalding, Aunt West, Aunt Nancy, Aunt French; and, on the other side, Aunt Mason, Aunt Appleton, and Aunt Lawrence. Their chronicles are written elsewhere in this book, their works and their words as herein written follow them. They were a notable company of women, and their daughters were no less so.

CHAPTER VI

LETTERS: ATHERTON AND MEANS.

1797 — 1853

Charles H. to Rebecca W. Atherton

AMHERST, Sept. 1, 1797.

My dear Rebecca,

Yours of last Wednesday, notwithstanding the rebuke it contained for my inattention, afforded me pleasure, yes at this instant it affords me pleasure. This I esteem to be proof that my not writing last week was not a culpable omission; for notwithstanding my general callousness of feeling I am so very nice in this point, that I should severely feel a reproach for wilful neglect. The balm of whole pages of agreeable things said afterwards, would hardly heal the wound. . . . It is a happy circumstance I think that you have been generally introduced to the fair circle of Portsmouth and that you now know all the names that sparkle on beauty's muster-roll. Your discription of Miss —— is not calculated I think to give me the most favourable impressions. I think I have discovered in your sex an outrageous levelling spirit. You would not like to be called democrats or Jacobins; but beauty is an aristocracy that you can not endure. Beauty is very seldom a monarch for its power is usually too much distributed, but when it is, what is the cry? Why down with it! She has

good eyes, but a shallow pate; a fair complexion, but an empty heart. She has learnt to say yea and no; but her composition is indifferent. To be or not to be would be no kind of a question for her. Strange, oh! child of spleen, that beauty is so great, so enviable a distinction, that all these hard things must be said to redeem it to a level with yourself. I have admired too your excessive charity. When nature is in angry mode, if she happens to form an unfair fair one, you never deny her an excellent understanding; and every mental embellishment is allowed her without one envious look. With humane sincerity, you lament that beauty is so essential a stamp for female currency. You rail at the depravity of our taste for passing covered before the shrine of wit and tact, while we bend the knee to that of beauty. How far your severity on Miss —— is desirous of the above you can answer better than myself. . . . I perceive there is only room to write my name and make a flourish so good bye.

CHARLES H. ATHERTON.

Rebecca W. Atherton to William Gordon, Senior.

EXETER 14th January 1799.

Monday evening.

Now for answering my dear brother's letter, which to be sure has remained too long unanswered —if you have thought of it, which by the way I

think something doubtful, you would likewise recollect, to palliate my neglect, that I am from home where my time is much occupied by dressing, visiting, and receiving company; I am ashamed to give you such an excuse, to acknowledge that my time has been so triflingly employed—but it is the truth; and I dare not deceive you—but to do myself justice, I have read some, and have been very punctual in writing to my Amherst friends every week. I can't tell when I shall return to them, my friends here, will not think of parting with me. Mrs. Smith talks of petitioning to mama to let me stay with her spring and summer; I don't know what mama will say to it, nor am I sure, although I am very happy here, what I wish her to say to it. . . .

And really you was not disappointed when you discovered the letter marked Exeter was from me; and not from your son as you first concluded—it was indeed a most flattering proof that the letter gave you pleasure. The addition of “The honourable” to the direction of my letter was all Mr. Smith's work—he has convinced me that it is altogether proper, that for the future I shall not omit it—he is reading the debates in the house of representatives, swearing at their stupidity—damning their nonsense—wondering what the blockheads are about! Do let us hear your voice that he may be reconciled to their nonsense—or rather that he may not damn you all together. I look in every paper for your name, and often find it, where the votes

are numbered—but not in the debates—therefore I have not the courage to read them—and can only laugh at Mr. Smith's violent manner of condemning them. . . .

William will write and give you a better account of himself than I am able to do, as he very steadily observes the directions of your letter not to visit here often—he is much devoted to his books—his instructors speak well of him—I have no doubt you will find every reason to be satisfied with his progress. As he was sitting by me the other day I observed he looked very contemplative—and asked him what he was thinking of?—"Why aunt, said he, it seems to me as if I could see Amherst, and I seem to be playing with the boys—they coming in at our kitchen door, and calling me to go skateing or something else with them—and it all seems as if I was there—and I was thinking, aunt, why it want just as well as if I really was there. I dreamed the other night that it was only custom that made it better." I was affected by the little fellow's reasoning—and could not, for the life of me, say anything to him—but I believe he is quite convinced that it is good for him to be here.

Yours affectionately,

R. W. A.

Charles H. to Nancy H. Atherton.

AMHERST, August 7th, 1800.

My dear Sister,

Nothing could terrify me more than the apprehension of being a Jacobin. I should rather encounter any other evil of Life, than be exposed to that moral pestilence. I would even fortify myself within the rampart of matrimony, to avoid such a terrible distemper. But what kind of connection your imagination has conjured up between the life of a Bachelor, and the temper of a Jacobin is difficult for me to conceive. They are opposite as the poles, one is boisterous the other calm, one is acid and the other sweet; the snakes of envy hiss around the head of a Jacobin, the muses and graces seem to delight to sport in the grey hairs of a Bachelor; the vulture of jealousy preys upon the heart of the one but some sweet cherub of peace feeds the other with the heavenly food of contentment. Yet could you ally them in your imagination for a moment! They are no more alike than Vulcan and his wife. But enough—you must be in love with an old Bachelor, or I say at once you have no taste. Every woman who expresses any dislike to that respectable character offends me outright, for it is offence to propriety, to taste and I am their advocate general. What the d—l would the world do if it were not for old Bachelors? Only answer me that question.

I saw Channing, Nancy, his sister, a charming

girl, and a number of other friends that made the undersigned very happy.

CHARLES H. ATHERTON.

Elizabeth W. to Rebecca W. Atherton.

May 5 1804.

Brother is going on business as far as Bedford & it is not unlikely that he may go as far as Amherst, & I will be no longer neglectful of my duty. I suppose you are anxious to hear how I was pleased with the exhibition & how I enjoyed the ball. Well I will begin with Miss Winget whose head *I* had the *honour* to dress, she wore a pink satin band 3 yds.: 3 quarters long trim'd with spangles, it went round the right side of her head, a bow at top, fastened with strings of beads, which went the left side & fastened a bow behind; beads cross'd on the top of her head, the band was hitched up on the shoulder & trained a yard & her gown was a handsome wrought muslin, under which, she wore a white satin skirt, this dress was only for the tragedy. Sally was Euphratia in the Grecian daughter, a tragedy; Phocian her husband was not as large as Joseph, he wore a compleat dress of regimentals; very natural as you will suppose. Words are too faint to express the *sensibility* Sally discover'd & my pen fails in the attempt. But to conclude there was a Latin & a Greek oration, delivered: several dialogues, single pieces, but no

good speakers, however we had no reason to expect to be *highly entertained* for the Preceptor is hardly compus-mentiss: a mere post, he enters into no amusement whatever; never allows himself to be more certain than this, when anyone asked him when he intended to have his exhibition he would answer that he thought it *something likely* he should have it in a *fortnit* & *some* more; he does not allow himself to visit at the same house but once in the course of 3 months, very fortunate for he has a certain routine of conversation, such as, when are you going home Miss Atherton, he has asked me that question more times than I can enumerate & I am determind to tell him that I am going the first opportunity for the future. We return'd from exhibition at 5 o'clock I laid down half an hour my head-ache went off & I arose & dress'd for the ball. I had alter'd my gown & with Charles slip made a very long train; I trimmed it with pink tufts before, wore the short sleeves & my band handsomely trimmed at the end & Catharine's gloves; you were very attentive in sending them my dear girls. Jane sent to Exeter & got $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard of sasnitt & made long sleeves, Sister wore a yellow band that I coloured & murtle on her head. Jane dress'd my head, I hers and Abigails. Mr. Thom & Mr. Fay from Haverhill came to attend the ball. Mr. Thom brought Eliza Thom from Derry. Brother, sister Jane, Joseph & myself assembled at Mr. Bells at 8 o'clock, from Mr. Bells we went to Doct^r. Wingets with Mr. & Mrs. Bell,

Sally Sargent, Eliza Thom & the young gentlemen; when we got there we found two-thirds of the company consisted of horse miliners, tanners, shoemakers, blacksmiths however it was exhibition ball & cannot be otherways than mixed. Mr. French treated sister with the greatest attention; but we all knew it was not from any *good motive* for he certainly knows that he is extremely disagreeable to all of us. Abigail drew the first draw dance: he told her that the little robin (meaning me) was always flutter'd when he came ny her, & she never would allow him to assist her in any other way than to pull her shoes out of the mud; he plagues me almost to death he asked my hand for the first volentary the minite I got into the hall; he came to take me up to dance the second & I was *determined* not to dance with him & danced with Mr. Bell, they had some words about it but Mr. F at length gave up: he does this in revenge for I have not treated him very well. The volentaries I enjoyed highly as the plebeians danced in a set by themselves; broke up at 3 o'clock; the Gentlemen breakfasted with us in the morning, after which Miss Thom, Sally Sargent, Jane myself & the gentlemen went to call on the ladies; return'd at twelve very much fatigued, the company left town in the afternoon & we again took up our own works.

I fear that I shall fatigue you with my nonsense. I feel very anxious to hear from my dear Catharine. Do write me a long letter & write me of Papa, brother, sisters & Jane Means. How did Mr.

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Kent get home? Nancy you must write to me my love & Catharine.

I remain with duty love & affection to Parents & friends your

ELIZA W. ATHERTON.

William Gordon, Junior, to Aunt Nancy.

AMHERST July 11, 1808.

Is my dear aunt so absorbed in contemplating the pleasures of her present delightful situation that a few thoughts from her William will be unwelcome intruders? Then let me tell you I have a great mind to be provoked with envy, in spite to go in person to participate a few days of your happiness and then to drive you home. . . . Betsie is quite a lady of pleasure. Every fine morning she and her gallant in her sedan, drawn by her milk white poney take an airing. The other morning, however, she was somewhat, as the gentlemen sometimes say of the ladies, jilted; for no sooner had she stepped into Col. Means to ask a few questions than away cut her gentlemen round the corner, slipped in la belle Catharine, and drove off—leaving her helpless, neglected, (and she would fain say, abused) to the mercy of the wide world. But, as I understand, she fortunately fell into the hands of a stripling beau, whose youth and gallantry contributed in some measure to restore her complacency. . . .

How do you like Charlestown simplicity? The ladies, take my responsibility, are worthy of your good thoughts. The gentlemen I shall not do so ungracious a task as to prejudge;—that is your province. I suppose you have not failed to write a few stanzas on the sublime and romantic appearance of the falls and their neighborhood. Preserve them; and I will bespeak a niche for them in the corner of our Cabinet: if indeed I can compromise with Cowper, extracts from whose writings occupy for the most part its poetic department. Yours,

W. G.

Aunt Kent to Aunt Nancy.

[Probably about 1809 or 10]

As I can not write to each of you my dear sisters—and you have each certainly the strongest claims that can be felt or acknowledged to this attention—I think to address this to you my dear Nancy for a sort of circular. You hope my dear Rebecca that Mary has contracted no bad habits, far from it she is I think much improved in reading sewing and her general demeanor she strives poor girl often to be amiable when her feelings are at war with her judgment she was very much alive to your letter and daily talks of you a great deal, she recollects her uncles condescending goodness in playing with her and learning “the steps” with the most perfect pleasure,—I have been trying to persuade myself

there was a similarity in your temper when a child to hers at present, but my recollection is too imperfect to give me much satisfaction. If you have any knowledge of your puerile days pray let me know I should feel greatly distressed to believe her peace of mind would ever continue as liable to interruption. She often asks me if she has not been a good girl and if I will not write to her Aunt Spalding about her.

Your affectionate interest my dear Catharine for Abby endears her even to me and most sincerely do I thank you for uniting this interest so tenderly with mine to make her what we could wish. I am sensible of the justness of your remarks and of the propriety and necessity of pursuing the measures you recommend with the dear child but more strongly impressed by your kind assistance in determining what we could do for her good. Do you my dear Girls *think* for me as much as you can and communicate your thoughts, particularly in the management of my children—for mine is such a busy life and so divided among many cares I fear they will be sufferers from my inattention—but a warning voice from those I consider almost equally interested with myself will awaken me to new powers and animate me to new exertions. I am quite delighted to observe the affection she has brought home in her heart—she describes little Robert in the most animated and natural manner how he laughs screams and jumps how her uncle lays him down calls him a jackobin how

sweet how handsome how bright he looks and all these eulogiums are finished with: Oh ma you cant think how he loves me! You are her pattern, and she recollects with sensations expressed by her voice and countenance that you once *spoke kind to her* and said Abby I love to have you so like me. She says her uncle gave her a book which she knows is a good book for she heard you say dont tear it Robert for it will teach me how to bring you up. I am not so much surprised at our dear Rebecca's attention to Mary as I am that you could do so much for Abby. She has indeed passed a happy summer, but she told me yesterday she wished she could stay it over again that she might not do some things that were wrong and which she should never do again. This wish was perfectly natural and what I have often felt myself when I viewed my faults but few, and thought the coming time I should be entirely perfect.

To you my dear Nancy who I am sure often think of me I have everything to say, of my husband that he is at court in his usual health. . . . Of my charming little Frances, who I believe—next to my husband, that her smiles animate and delight me from morning till night. Of Charles that he gets his lessons more perfectly and is very happy and fond of home since the little Girls returned—of myself and Philip that we miss you more than I can express he often calls on me to take care of his little favorite Frances and when I cannot as often happens he says why did not Aunt Nancy stay when

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she wants her so? but I am now in a way to have more leisure for them all—my Candia Girl is like to prove capable and active. Brothers visit was indeed short but you know I receive great satisfaction in seeing them tho it were but a minute. . . . Make an affectionate remembrance to Cousin Rebecca—I should be highly gratified in seeing her. Do write me a long letter.

Affectionately your ABIGAIL.

Mrs. Charles H. Atherton to Aunt Nancy.

AMHERST, July 29th, 1810.

Sabth eveng.

Dear Nancy,

I will write a few hasty lines this evening which is the only opportunity I shall have before the stage leaves town, to thank you for your letter. . . . I can give you little intelligence that is new or interesting in return for your communications. Providing food for our hay makers, reapers and the rest of our family, with picking feathers and the care of the children have almost wholly occupied me since you left us. Employments, some of them not very agreeable in themselves, but which the good expected from them have rendered quite tolerable. Bread is necessary and a clean and downy bed is one of our greatest luxuries in the cold of winter. I spent an afternoon a week since with sister Becca at sister Mean's. She cut me out

a wrap by hers as you know I must be in the fashion, which I have made. This is the only time I have been out except last evening I was at Mrs. Spalding's. Her sweet little girl grows very fast and was bright and playful as a bird. Mrs. Col. Means I have not seen except one forenoon when she and Mary Ann called on me, but I have received a number of instances of her neighborly kindness such as sending me cucumbers, etc. etc.

Your Brother has passed one week in Boston — George insisted that he went to get him a *sugar plum*, and it was a business you may be sure he did not fail to accomplish. On Tuesday he goes to Gilmantown a journey which will take him another week. He is absent a great deal! but I have no real reason to complain, for he leaves me surrounded with comforts, and then there is the pleasure of having him come home which I should know nothing of were he never gone. I used to think my own satisfaction in beholding those I loved after an absence was sufficient! but how much is it increased by the delight Charles and George always manifest at seeing their father! not to mention his in return! It is impossible for the heart not to dilate with joy at viewing the little creatures so affectionate and happy. . . .

I will attend to getting Mrs. West's velvet, remember me to her and Mr. West. I have written enough to tire you and will hasten to conclude with wishes for your restored health. Yours

M. A. ATHERTON.

Aunt Appleton to Aunt Mason.

AMHERST, June 17, 1820.

My dear Sister

We are still under my dear father's roof, for owing to some inattention in the Capt. of the vessel the residue of my furniture was not taken from Brunswick as soon as I expected and it has not yet arrived. I shall look for it next Monday. I have been over to the farm house today, putting things in order. I have had a girl engaged this week washing paint and cleaning house, and I expect to keep her this summer as my friends thought I had better keep help and she can assist Mrs. Blake when she has extra work to do as will be often the case in the summer. I am perfectly satisfied with my situation—it is under present circumstances, the best that I could expect and the farm is very pleasant at this season. Our dear friends do not express any impatience at having so large a family; but I know that it must be inconvenient and wish on that account to be at housekeeping. As some little compensation to my dear parents for their great kindness to me, I hope to be able to contribute a little to the comfort of their visits at the farm this summer. I think we can render their stay pleasant to them.

I hope, my dear sister, that Mr. M., yourself, and as many of the family will come to A——t this summer as can conveniently. We should be rejoiced to share your visit with our friends. I have

heard nothing of Mr. Mason since he has been at Concord, but that his influence was extending itself and would be sensibly felt. I did not know but that he might come and spend one Sabbath at Amherst.

My Mother had some of the calico you mentioned in the house, but there was no other in the store of the kind you mentioned. She sends three yards of it. We have been engaged in quilting bed quilts this week for my mother, as there were so many of us we made dispatch. The girls have not attended to much other work lately. We expect next week they will make a beginning upon the work you sent. Mary has finished a ruffle which she begs you to accept from her and she would request the favor of her cousin Mary to make such a puff in the middle as you like. We feel under much obligation to you, and Mr. Mason for your very great sympathy and kindness.

We have been tried with severe affliction my dear sister, but it is a very great alleviation to find friends disposed to contribute all in their power to our assistance and comfort, and I think that I feel, and I am persuaded that my children do, that it is for our happiness as well as interest to be industrious; and to do whatever is in our power for our own support. Jane, William, and Robert, go to school and attend I should hope pretty well to their studies. Jane's health is improved. William has written a letter to Mr. Newman today in which he gives him some account of himself and Robert. I

feel somewhat anxious for my dear children, they have lost the best of earthly guides in their dear Father, but I hope that his precepts which must long be remembered and his excellent example in life will always have an influence on their future characters. Their Heavenly Father is abundantly able to take care of them, and to His care I would desire to commit them.

Brother D. and wife intend next week to go to Boston and Marblehead, they will take little Catharine with them, in hopes that the journey will benefit her, as she is a slender child. Give my love to Mary Ann and tell her that her little cousin "Aunt Nancy Ellis" is very pretty and begins to grow quite social. She paid us a visit today, and tried to answer all our questions. The girls have all gone to walk this afternoon, to try to find some strawberries; they are just beginning to ripen.

Sister Ellis is as well as usual. She sends love to you all. Father and Mother are in their usual health, though I think that the former feels the debility of age coming more than I have ever known him. My Mother you know will always find enough to do to keep her busy, and is as active as ever, I think, though she says she is not as strong as she was last summer. Most of the neighbors, my old acquaintances have called upon me, but I have returned but very few of the visits yet and think I shall not until I get settled. Brother Robert is as usual very attentive to us all. You kindly hope in your letter to sister Ellis that I have disposed

of my eastern money. Mr. Means of Boston exchanged \$300 at a discount of 1% and I sent the Hallowell and Augusta Castine and Wiscasset bills I had in my possession to Mr. Stone of Brunswick; he wrote me that he thought he could dispose of them better than I could. He says the reputation of the banks is very low. I received a very friendly letter from Mrs. Stone in which she says she hopes to visit us in the autumn. Mary had a letter from Alice McK. and another from Sullivan Abbot which Mr. Packard carried to Boston. It is exceedingly pleasant to us to hear from our friends at Brunswick. I have love in abundance from each member of the family to you and yours in which they are most cordially joined by your affectionate sister,

E. APPLETON.

Aunt Spalding to Cousin Abba.

Dec 3rd, 1821

This day, my dear child you are 12 years old, I trust you will not fail to spend some part of it as of every day in asking the direction and protection of him to whom you are indebted for life health kind friends and many other blessings; in careful self examination, and in new resolutions to correct whatever you find amiss in heart and conduct. You know my dear that your rules of self examination are in your Bible, not in the maxims of the world. Your inquiry is not to be what do others, but what

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will my heavenly Father, what will my own conscience, approve.

Had we received any intelligence of cousin Philips being found before you left home, I believe we had not. You will rejoice to hear that Capt McGregor met him in Boston, and on inquiry, found Philip had engaged himself a voyage going first to Havanah from thence to some European port. He appeared to regret the manner in which he left home but was not willing to return till he had made one voyage. Capt McGregor immediately wrote his father—and received his consent that he should go, sent him money and clothing—last week your uncle Means was in Boston and saw Philip several times. He told him when he went to bed he had not the most distant idea of leaving his father's house in such a manner, but he lay restless thinking of his wish to go to sea, and it came into his mind, why don't I go now this very night, jumped out of bed, took his shoes and stockings in his hand, wrote over the fire with a coal "I am gone," and went off as fast as he could, traveled miles before he put on his shoes and stockings, 25 cents in his pocket, the clothes he had on were all his treasure. He purchased seven biscuits on his journey and reached Boston the day after he left home, he procured lodgings in some barn and the next day let himself for the voyage, agreeing to work the first month without wages—and went to work and you may suppose was very dirty when Capt McG— met him—the poor fellow had slept

in the vessel on a plank with no covering but a sail. Capt McG— took him to a boarding house. He told your uncle he could not help laughing to find himself in a comfortable bed as he had made rather a foolish bargain for himself. Capt McG. procured his discharge and has engaged him a birth in a fine vessel of Mr. Grays which is fitting for an India voyage—he is to have 5 dollars pr month the vessel will be absent two or three years it is armed sufficiently to protect from Pirates. Thus through the energetic kindness of Capt McG— the poor boy is like to go to sea under very advantageous circumstances. . . .

Your affectionate MOTHER.

Cousin Abba to Uncle Spalding.

CHARLESTOWN, June 29th 1822—

My dear father,

I received your kind letter a week since and should have answered it last week, had I not supposed you would see my letter to Cornelia Claggett. I had not been so exorbitant in my demands on my purse as to exhaust its contents, and had just enough to purchase a parasol with *two cents* over You say you shall not send my gloves until you get something to make a larger bundle, for fear they should be lost, for the same reason I do not send your ruffle, as I think it would be a *great pity* to have anything so “beautiful” lost, but a

much more preferable way to that of sending it would be to have you come here and get it, which if you will promise to do, I will have it done up plaited and already for you to put on. I should like to hear something of my plants and garden. I want to see my dear brothers and sister very much, I believe I think more of James and Rebecca than the others, though I do not think I love them any better. I am very thankful dear little James escaped drowning, think Alfred behaved very well for such a child.

Be assured my dear Father, that your affectionate daughter, will endeavor never to forget that there is a God who always sees us and whose kind providence is always exerted in our favour.

A. A. SPALDING.

Abigail and Mary Kent to Aunt Nancy.

CHESTER, March 5th, 1823.

Your letter, my dear Aunt, was truly agreeable and it is the only one we have received from Amherst since our return. I am very happy to hear that Aunt Means has *at last* visited Mrs. Spalding. I hope she had a pleasant journey. Your letter left us nothing to wonder at, so communicative was it, except the "funny circumstance" relative to good Mrs. Pincheon—pray give it us in your next that we may enjoy it while her primitive character is fresh in our minds.

The muslin is beautiful and we are much indebted to your kind attention. Pa returned from court this morning. He has felt very impatient to come home since he heard of Philip's arrival, but court did not rise until Saturday and since then the travelling prevented. He is much gratified at Philip's appearance, as we are all. He now attends to geometry and navigation—under Mr. Lewis—and seems very desirous of acquiring a competent knowledge of them. He is very stout and in his blue doublet he looks truly like a sailor boy. I am sure you would not recognize him. He wishes much to see his Amherst friends, particularly his Uncle Means. As to his next voyage, although he thinks highly of Capt. Cook, so strong is his attachment to Capt. McGregor he has an earnest wish to go out with him. Philip went to see him immediately on his return, but he was unfortunately absent. George is very inquisitive respecting Philip's travels. He goes with the map of the world and asks him to describe with his finger for the twentieth time the course which he sailed and then asks are the folks white or like the chimney brick? how long are the snakes and many other questions which amuse us very much. Remember me to Uncle, Mary, Jane and Abba Spalding and all my amiable cousins.

Yours with much affection

A. A. KENT.

Abby has left me "every thing she has forgotten" to write you, my dear Aunt, but I do not set down

with despairing feelings as I know you will be an indulgent reader. I was very happy in reading your letter. How kind you were to send with it the charming present of muslin! I hope you will not feel the want of it. . . . Abby, Charles, Philip and I have been out this evening, down to Capt. Gregerson's. We have had a pleasant time and returned with a very good opinion of their industry, economy, etc. etc. Rag mats, braided rugs, (ugly as possible to be sure) do make quite a show and I advise you, my dear Aunt, if you want the reputation of an astonishingly notable woman to commence operations on some old rags; and make them into some form that can be dragged forth on convenient occasions.—I want to hear in your next what work you are doing, of your reading, visiting, and all. Do remember me to my Uncles and Aunts, my suitables to all who care to ask for me. Philip sends love, but is afraid he shall not go to Amherst. Tell Charles, Abby and I hope he has vanity enough to believe we are dying to see him. Oh for "Gentlemen of distinction," will mine ears hear or eyes see their like again!

Be that how it may, I am truly and affectionately

Yours

M. M. KENT.

Cousin Abba to Aunt Spalding.

CHARLESTOWN June 9th 1823.

My dear Mother,

I went to the tavern on Saturday hoping though but little expecting to find a bundle, to my great joy I found that you had received so many packages destined for Charlestown that you were obliged to send the bundle, although it prevented your writing a long letter the few lines you sent were very acceptable, indeed rather more so than a long one would have been as it gave me reason to expect *another sooner than I otherwise should have done.*

Thank you dear Mother for the things you sent me. I like my mantle very much, my shoes too, they are the right size, the little wax box is pretty as well as useful. I can get a good parasol here for fifteen shillings but not under, shall I take it? Did Mrs. Benden forget to purchase my long gloves or why did you not send them?

I wish Mother if it would not be too much trouble that you would transcribe Mary Jane's letter or a part of it, I want to know something of the Groton school very much. I have not been very particular in writing you an account of the rules and regulations of Mrs. Webbers school because I told you so much about it last winter, they are very much the same except that there is a paper pasted up on one side of the schoolroom with the names of the scholars on one side and over the top is written Bad Lessons, Idleness, Inattention, Carelessness,

Rudeness—if any of the young ladies are found guilty of any of these crimes she has a black mark put down against her name, there are none against mine yet and I do not intend there shall be.

My love to Cornelia Claggett, I shall write to her as soon as I have time—but I do not think I can possibly write as sentimental a one as she wrote me. Laura Lovell said to me one day as we were returning from school “George (the man who tends the store) says you may have the parasol for thirteen & six.” I do not know how he happened to alter his mind. I did not say anything about the price when I was in the store. Do you wish me to cut out the scallups before I send your ruffle? We have received the letter from Mary Kent. M. A. sends love, mine to all my dear friends, particularly father, brothers, Philip, kiss Rebecca and James—I trust I shall never forget what good and kind parents I have, that I may prove myself worthy of them, is the sincere wish of

your affectionate daughter,

A. A. SPALDING.

Mary Appleton to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST, August 8th, 1823

Frown my dear Uncle, if you will, and that I am pretty sure you will, when on opening this you find that one of your little upstart neices has for a moment taken the place of your “ain wifec” and

pray dont let your disappointment overcome your good nature, when I tell you further that I am deputized, nay commanded by the good lady herself thus to intrude upon you, not that your kind letter was not read by her with a smiling face and a sparkling eye, but it is a most lovely evening and having deferred, returned the calls of many old friends and furthermore, finding my dear grandmother in a mood to accompany her just now, she has sallied forth for the above-named purpose.

Mama has gone over to chat an hour with Aunt Mary and I rather think has a sly design to give her a little instruction, advice or something of the kind with regard to the all important arts of house-keeping like a good older sister. Now what shall I tell you about the young couple? That they are as happy as mortals deserve to be, that the bride is as blooming and smiling as Hebe, and that the old bachelor finds there are better places of abode than a dusty office, greater pleasures than that of making out writs, or even of receiving a lawyer's fee, and—strange to say—smiles more bewitching, even than those of his neices. Proofs positive, is it not, that the race against whom you declaim so much is not absolutely incorrigible? But I will enlarge no more upon this topic lest you should accuse me of telling great stories, when you come, instead of saying with the old queen that “the half was not told” you. Uncle David and Mama met the young couple several miles from the village and returned with them to their own residence about eight

o'clock P. M. where we were one and all collected to receive them and sip a comfortable dish of tea with them. Frances and I were so unceremonious as to take a lodging with them fearing they might suffer from ennui and by one of the luckiest chances in the world that very day, Elisa and the two Miss Dana's came into town. The former, however, spent the night with her aunt at Milford and returned next morning to us so that we were enabled to assemble all the strangers and divers others at a sociable tea-party in the evening. This morning at eight they, viz Eliza and her companions left us in fine spirits and with the prospect of a very warm ride.

And now to say a little of your own concerns, my dear Aunt's visit gives us all more pleasure than I can express and we have clear comfort in her society and perhaps you will bear your own privation with a better grace from being constantly sensible that your privations constitute the pleasures of your friends. We'll allow you however to be a little selfish. Susanna is finely and runs about with Robert and her little cousins across the street at a great rate and as to "little puss" she increases in beauty and stature every day, and we all pronounce her a wonderfully knowing one, and I think her grandmother rather exceeds anyone of us in complimenting her. I really don't know what we shall do without her.

Give our best love to both dear Jenny's. We do say that the older of the two is a naughty girl for

not writing oftener and longer letters, but suppose that at present she concludes your epistles will make amends for her silence, but Jenny dear, you must very soon sit down, when *you are not in a hurry* and give us a past and present history of yourself forgetting no one item that you know we shall like to hear, of your own concerns, Jenny Mason's or those of any of our friends and you shall be repaid in kind abundantly. Excuse this digression, my dear Uncle, and believe me with love from us all to you and yours

Your truly affectionate and grateful niece

MARY M. APPLETON.

Jane and Aunt Appleton to Uncle Lawrence.

Feb. 18, 1824

How can I sufficiently express my thanks to my dear Uncle for his benificent present of one of the most sonorous, harmonious, delightful and soul-inspiring instruments that has ever been seen or heard and "for my single self," I do say, that I have experienced more pleasure for the last three days than I have for weeks before; and within these three days, it has been distributed most faithfully through all parts of the house and enlivened every individual of the family and has in part effected Mary's recovery. Both she and Grandmother are very comfortable today, and we had a fine time in the bedroom, reading our letters and hearing the

conversation of Mary Jane who arrived this evening, highly pleased with the city and its inhabitants. I received a fine letter from my sweet, lovely cousin Jane, which shall be answered very soon and the answer shall not be a brief one. I am extremely grieved that she has been so sick and do sincerely hope that she will have no return of her indisposition. She is very kind to copy music for me and give me the song which was hers, she will know best what to choose in buying music, only let it be something which is not very difficult and that I can learn. I do long to see that dear little Rose Bud and give her a few of my gentle kisses. Much love to all and will you my dear Uncle receive the very grateful affection of

JANE.

. . . When the bag which Mary Jane brought was opened and my mother saw the good things it contained, she said do you not think those good folks will make themselves poor by giving us so much? Mary answered—You know dear grandmother it is written that the “liberal soul shall be made fat” and I am sure it is verified both to Uncle and Aunt Lawrence. Mary is much obliged to you, my dear Sir, for your letter and kind feelings. She will, I think, do very well without sack as she takes pretty liberally of very fine Port wine, which came from the same fountain. . . . My mother with all the family join me in the kindest feelings to you both and your little girls, Amos and Jane M. Brother Robert has just come in, he and wife are

very well, he has been at New Ipswich today and returned since breakfast. That every blessing you afford to others may be multiplied to you in rich abundance is the sincere wish and prayer of your grateful and affect. sister

E. APPLETON.

Note made by Amos Lawrence

Boston, March 11, 1847 More than twenty-three years ago, this letter was received, read and given into dear wife's care, and from that time, I never saw it again until yesterday! The persons and scenes come before me as tho' but yesterday, the "two little girls" and the greater part of all others named have passed on and wife and I are left.

AMOS LAWRENCE.

Aunt Lawrence to Her Husband.

AMHERST July 1st, 1825

The picture you drew of your snug little family, my dear husband, brought you all directly before me in the dear little room, and I was thankful you were all so comfortably situated. I hope the children enjoyed themselves at the dancing school on Thursday, and presume that Susanna would not go to Dedham until that important day was passed. I have enjoyed myself very much since I came up, and the more for seeing that little Mary appears more animated and I would fain hope stronger.

We carry her to ride every day that is pleasant, and sometimes both forenoon and afternoon. . . .

On Monday, Mr. and Mrs. Lord with Madam Lord (who is now visiting at her sons) and some more of our good neighbors took tea with us, on Tuesday it rained, Wednesday I went to Roberts, yesterday we were at David's and today we go to Mr. Lord's. So you see I have been occupied. No time has hung heavy on my hands. All our friends here are at present in very good health, I have not seen my mother appear so well for two or three years. . . .

Mary Appleton finds herself quite at home after her long absence, and not less happy than she anticipated in company of Fanny and Jenny. They all desire a great deal of love to you and promise they shall be right glad to see you, come when you may, but they would be willing you should defer it until the last of next week. But after saying all this I would have you consult your own convenience and I shall be ready at any time. No letter for me I find but I will believe the old adage that no news is good news and make myself easy. Remember me very affectionately to the children and believe as ever Yours

N. LAWRENCE

Cousin Abba to Aunt Spalding.

KEENE August 26th 1825.

I was very much surprised my dear Mother, at the first sentence in your kind letter, viz, that you did not receive a line from me last week. I certainly wrote a note and put it in the box, you must have thought me a strange girl to have sent a bundle without writing you. . . . The Chemical Lectures began yesterday, Miss Fiske asked me to go and I went, the expense is only a dollar—I thought they certainly could do me no harm & I might learn something. What he said was correct as far as I could judge, his delivery to be sure is not the most elegant, and the poetry he drags in by the head and shoulders, does not I suspect strike us as he intends it should—however I ought not to write this, for Miss F. particularly requested we should not take notice of such things, at least to laugh.

I cannot as you say you fear, do anything with the pieces—if you could send me some kind of coloured sleeves that would do to wear with that gown I should like it very much, but white does not answer to wear here every day, it shows the dirt so quickly—the gown would be very useful it is so dark. . . .

Yours my dear Parents, with more love than I can express,

ABBA.

Aunt Nancy to Aunt West.

AMHERST, Decr. 12th 1825. Tuesday eveng.

Your kind and gratifying letter my dear Fanny, I received this eveng and am happy to make you a return from this my dear native village—which I leave the day after tomorrow. My visit has been a happy one, and I shall return to the affection and kindness of my Chester friends, as to an asylum where virtue and cheerfulness ought to reconcile me to all the deprivations of very limited society and the pain of seeing a sister & her dear family necessitated to encounter the many hardships that self dependence necessarily involves. For all in all I have seldom been more happy. The first three weeks of my visit I spent with Catharine — she is well & happy, her lovely family hover about her like cherubs to direct & imploy her many talents and to perpetuate her virtues, her worth is felt & estimated by all who come within the sphere of her excellencies, and she seems at peace with all the world. Several succeeding weeks I spent with Rebecca, whose sweet smile, calm, dignified and benevolent, could not but diffuse something by its attractions, and if from sympathy I know not, I have seldom believed myself possessed of so great a share of those magnanimous qualities. . . .

I have been with brother 3 weeks and tho' Mary Ann is at Hampton and Charles but looks in on us occasionally it has been very pleasant to me. His health is fine and the nameless attractions of his

cultivated mind & kind manners, and the personal comforts diffused about him all tend to sweeten life; and I am very sensitive on those points. He is now at Boston—returns tomorrow & goes to Chester next day. Amos was there one night last week, found all well and happy, so far as I could learn. It will give you pleasure to learn Mr. Means likes him very much.

Mr. Barnard is *very* unwell does not look like ever being in good health again but he is not discouraged. Abba Spalding is with sister Betsey, who is very well—she is to return soon. I have made a long eveng and will only add my best love to William and give you other items in mornng in my letter to Abby. Adieu—

N. H. ATHERTON.

Tuesday mornng—

The morning has dawned upon me bright but chilling to everything but my affections and I must hasten to tell you what heartfelt pleasure your affectionate & entertaining letter gave me. I have sent it to Catharine, for there has been a general wonder & anxiety that we have heard nothing from our Charlestown friends, and I only write when prompted by a sense of the kind attention of my much loved friends, for a talent little used becomes dull, and knowing it has little to commend it but the heart, whose affection may be bright & vivid without the mechanical exertion of impressing the picture, they flow on and leave no trace behind:

but I do not approve, there is much bliss in the sweet sympathies of life, and they will not be sustained where is no reciprocation. . . .

To sisters kind invitation that I should visit her, I give the tribute of my love, but my impression is, that another journey this winter will not be favourable to my health or the support of her spirits, but I have no determined plan for futurity—tho I wish to spend part of next summer with Betsey, where I have not been 3 or 4 years, & a few weeks in Boston. Adieu.

NANCY H. ATHERTON.

Abigail Kent to Cousin Abba.

MARBLEHEAD. March 1st. 1827.

If your quiet spirit my dear cousin has been in the smallest degree disquieted or if you have vexed and wondered at my long silence and pertly said, "I was not so good as Mary"—why for all the mischief the first may have occasioned I stand reprov'd and for that last saucy remark I freely forgive you—if on the contrary you have thought little of the matter why this sheet will no doubt be an unexpected pleasure. . . .

Mary French wrote cousin Robert that we were going to a large party at Mrs. Peabody's, yes we were going—our dresses were prepared and we were to stay at Mrs. Peabody's invitation and spend a few days with her and attend Miss Endicott's

ball—but “let no man say he is sure of pleasure for tomorrow” when our beaux came to the door the rain fell the wind blew, the very elements conspired against us and we e’en gave it up as an impos- or rather improper-bility the next week we had a note from Mrs. P. repeating her request and enclosing invitations to the Washington ball I felt quite averse to going, for as the Derbys were all in mourning and it was so long since I had a passing acquaintance in Salem, that I was afraid I should be alone in a crowd but I was most agreeably disappointed—all whom I had ever seen seemed to recollect me and many agreeable strangers were introduced to me in the course of the evening among the rest Judge White, who was introduced as an old friend of my Fathers, he enquired for all my friends Dr and Mrs Spalding and Mrs Means he once met at Londonderry, “she was a very lively young lady,” he introduced me to his daughter and to several good partners. Mr. Saltonstall I also danced with he looks extremely like Uncle Means The whole entertainment was splendid—cake lemonade and wine between the dances—then supper—the tables were spread upstairs, we had oysters and oranges, ham and hot coffee jelly and jam, setiment and celery, cockles and cranberry, custard and cake, tarts and tongue, these with the accompaniments, made as you may suppose a fine display and enough to satisfy the keenest appetite, but after two dances more, ice creams and macaroons, were sent round and after that chocolate about that time

we left, but I hear the evening concluded with whiskey punch—the dresses were most splendid, one of the most singular was trimmed with ostrich feathers round the bottom and strange to say was much admired. Tomorrow we expect to attend a large private ball at Mrs. Y. A. Peabody's and on Monday I shall return to Chester. I think it is best to go home as Mary is I suppose about moving and I find it difficult to go from Amherst. Give my love to all my dear friends who ask why I do not return to Amherst and tell them my good reasons. I have enjoyed my visit here very much, Aunt has a fine boy and looks uncommonly well herself, she desires her love and thinks she shall be at Amherst in the course of two months.

Your affectionate cousin

A. A. KENT.

P. S. I flatter myself I shall be very entertaining when I go to Amherst to keep school. I attended a very stylish dinner party the other day at Col. Pickmans, all the perpendiculars you shall have when we met. Our friends say love to Abba, acknowledge this letter to Chester if you please.

A. KENT.

Uncle Lawrence to Mary Appleton.

BOSTON, Feb. 5, 1829

Dear Mary:

Your grandmother's desire to have me with her

to explain some of the things in the "picture" I sent, is not greater than mine to be with her: but I cannot just now leave home. Her letter I shall retain as a "keep sake," and I would not exchange it for any one of the "Bookstore articles;" of that sort of the present season. For the writing her name at the end of a letter of her dictation, at the age of seventy-six, I feel very much obliged. Your Uncle David will explain to you the particulars of your Aunt Nancy's troubles; she has suffered immensely, more than I have ever known her, but she is now in pretty good spirits and I trust will get good health as the spring opens. She ought to have taken an emetic after little Mary's death, but she could not muster resolution. She says she is older than her mother and not worth half as much in the ordinary duties of life. I tell her I will not dispute with her about the relative value of herself and mother, but she may compare herself with anybody else and I will dispute her from morning to night before I will admit she is a whit behind the very best she can select. I wish she had someone here to talk with. I wrote Mary Mason, if she could come to spend a few days, I should be very glad, if the family was so that she could leave home. Your grandmother's kind offer would have been accepted, and I should have gone for her if your mother had been home; *as it was and is* your aunt thinks it not prudent for her to leave home.

Dear little Robert looks finely, he is as plump as he ever was, and as full of prattles and play as he

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can hold. He remembers you all at Amherst perfectly; sometimes repeats Aunt Betsey's sayings with her manner, and then laughs. He is excellent company.

Your Aunt did not wish the return of the Cambridge book; I sent another (Atlantic Souvenir) which Robert has rather abused, but you will please keep it. The Western Souvenir is the best in its literary character; after I have read it I will send it, if I think of it.

And now dear Mary I must go to my daily labour, after wishing you *the best* that a fond uncle can for a beloved niece, (in all which Jane will feel herself included, for I consider I am writing to both of you) and joining with you, your beloved grandmother, to whom please say there is nothing I feel so proud of as being enabled to subscribe myself her son

AMOS LAWRENCE.

Cousin Abba to Cousin Edward Spalding.

AMHERST, July 24, 1830.

So good a letter as yours my dear brother, shall not go unanswered a single day. I am very glad you think my letters particularly deserving of long answers, as certainly nothing gives me greater pleasure than receiving such from you. . . .

James Means is a saucy boy to say what he does of Mary's staying at Cambridge last year. I am

glad you make no such comments; and however it might be in some cases, there was no reason for such a remark in this case for Mr. Felton's offer was entirely unexpected to Mary. She esteemed him very much but had no idea he had any such intentions. Mary does, as you say, deserve a very superior man for a husband, and I think she will have one in Felton and therefore it is a very happy thing. We have been expecting him here but Aunt just received a letter from Mary in which she says he will not be able to return this way on account of some engagement at Boston, to deliver an address I believe. I hope I am not one of your ladies you wish married off, for as there is not any prospect of it, it would be rather unfortunate.

I have read "Patronage" several years since and have forgotten a good deal of it, but remember that it is remarkable for its good common sense. There are a good many excellent ideas in it. I have just finished "Moore's Life of Byron" (that is the only volume that is out) read aloud to Aunt French. His was a life that put all common sense and good principle at defiance and a most miserable man he was. I am more impressed with it than ever since reading his life. Yet he had some interesting traits of character—generosity and magnanimity—but was utterly inconsistent and unprincipled, save in making it a principle to do what he was a mind to and that it made him a miserable and a selfish man notwithstanding his generosity.

Your present plan for the White Hills will do

very well I should think. Father thought it would be rather an extravagant one, to ride all the way—besides, a young man would be almost ashamed to tell of it in these walking days. . . . As to the ball I do not think Mother and Father feel such very decided objections to your attending it if you wish it, and taking into consideration your very cogent reasons for wishing it though I must say I do not think the specimen one sees of the world in a ball-room improves our opinion of the sense of its inhabitants, but they would extremely regret to see you estimating such amusements of any importance or much interested in them if your curiosity to attend is very great they are willing you should and all I have to say is—judge for yourself. . . .

Write soon—Your affectionate sister A.

Aunt Spalding to Cousin Edward.

AMHERST, July 27th, 1830.

My dear Edward:

I fear you will begin to think me quite regardless of your request, but it is not so, for I have been getting along with the pantaloons as fast as I could, with my other engagements which have been rather multiplied of late. You know it is the hurrying season on the farm—reaping and hay-making employ a good many hands. We began last week with nine, we did not have so many through the week but enough to keep the work going very briskly.

We have good health, good crops and we ought to have thankful hearts. . . . We are expecting daily a visit from Mr. Felton. By the way, have you been made acquainted with cousin Mary's engagement, if not let me now introduce Mr. Felton to you as one with whom she has agreed to join her destiny. He is at present one of the tutors in Cambridge, he has the reputation of being a fine scholar and a man of very correct and amiable character. I hope there are many pleasant days in store for her, but don't mention the affair unless it is first mentioned to you as she would not like to have the report go from her friends first. . . . You mention wanting the white pantaloons for commencement, but I should think black would be more genteel with a light vest. You must not wear dark vest or hose with white pantaloons, however these are not very important affairs and I do not insist on your following my directions with regard to them. I should think the commencement ball would be omitted in respect to the memory of your late Professor. Believe me dear son, they are scenes of vanity and folly. It seems by your last that you have determined on your White Hill excursion. Why have you given up the plan of walking? Do you fear the fatigue? I confess, that whether you walk or ride, I have some anxiety on that account and enjoin it on you to be cautious and not suffer yourself to get excessively fatigued.

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Adieu my son, may you be blessed and protected
in all your way.

Your affectionate mother,

R. W. SPALDING.

My Grandmother to Aunt West.

AMHERST, January 7th 1831.

Friday Even'g

How long it is, my dearest sister, since we have exchanged letters, the epistolary intercourse has fallen entirely into the hands of Abigail and her daughters since the latter went to Charlestown. It is true we hear of your welfare more frequently and regularly, and this is a great pleasure, but I think it ought not to supercede a more direct intercourse.

Since you were here we have been greatly afflicted by the sickness and death of my dear Nephew William Appleton — it is a sore stroke indeed to his poor mother and sister and brother — and by us at first scarcely less keenly felt. He was a young man of great promise and exceedingly endear'd to me, and to my children near his age; and the circumstances of his sickness — all — everything relating to it, has made us feel it a most solemn and effecting Providence. We have frequent letters from Robert. He has been placed in very trying circumstances, not only with regard to the loss of his beloved companion but on account of not finding employment as soon as he expected. We feel

that we err'd in judgement in expecting he would get business at a season of the year when mercantile pursuits are stagnant in all the cities, and in Cincinnati their trade depends on the rise of the Ohio river which was greatly affected by the drought this fall. I must ever feel keenly every thing of an unpleasant nature that affects my dear children, but I trust I feel it with submission and am ever supported with this hope that they will all tend to the improvement of their characters. Uninterrupted prosperity and success, I am persuaded is not good for us, and if by affliction we are made more prepared for our heavenly Father's kingdom, we shall bless the hand which has chastened us. Immediately after Williams death Robert went into a store, which situation he continues to like very much — is much pleased with the City — and has found many excellent friends, who have shown him great kindness. James is now at home for his winter vacation, which is eight weeks — three are already gone. We have the unspeakable comfort of seeing his mind directed to the subject of religion. William we expect next week. Mary Jane has been deeply affected by the death of her cousin, she now has a bad cold which few of our friends have escaped this winter. Mrs. Spalding has been seriously sick with it, and was out for the first time on new years day, at the usual assemblage of the family at brother's. We have had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Felton, I say *we* — I ought rather to say Mary as he was so de-

voted as scarcely to leave the house, the whole fortnight — never without her, however what we did see of him impress'd us most favorably — Mary's health is not good, but much I suppose as it has been during the summer — she has gone to Dr. Spalding's and I hope will gain more strength before she returns to her arduous duties. . . .

Mr. Means and all the children send love.

Your affectionate sister,

C. MEANS.

Aunt Mary Jane to Cousin Abba.

[Previous to 1832.]

PORTSMOUTH, November, Sat. Eve.

My dear Cousin; I have heard from time to time that you were still rustivating at Chelmsford, or I should have done myself the pleasure to send you a letter long ere this.

But now my dear Cousin there is no escape. I have a long Saturday's evening before me and nothing on earth to do but to prate away to you until nine o'clock or so, if I can make my paper last so long, to affect which desirable end I have begun with my lines close together. . . .

There are a vast number of extremely pretty girls in Portsmouth, but none other so regularly handsome as Jane Mason. The most favorite subject of conversation is the desperate lack of gentlemen.

What would they think of Amherst, generous creatures that we are, about to relinquish the only man that we have left to these extortioners? I must confess the necessity of the case somewhat detracts from our merit. I for one would never have given my consent if I could have helped myself.

These four young ladies who are sitting at the same table with me impede my progress marvelously, they are laughing loud and long and I have twice been compelled to throw down my pen and laugh with them albeit the cause of the merriment I am as ignorant of as you are. Mary Anne screams, Jane Mason opens her mouth and shakes with silent laughter, Mary takes it moderately, Jane Appleton and I join in in our usual manner which I suppose you remember. You can judge the scene in your mind's eye I have no doubt.

What is the matter with poor Ellen? I am truly sorry for her, will you give her my love and say that I hope to have an opportunity to see more of her when I return? My conscience reproaches me sadly for being so selfish to consider her a burthen and I hope that when I come home I shall think more of her pleasure than my own. If you and Mary Anne both pass the winter at our home I think we shall have a capital time; it is true that we must depend very much upon each other, but I hope we shall be together a great deal. I don't think there are many people in the world who live so much within their families as the good old folks

at Amherst. I understand that Miss Peckman is about to visit Amherst, write to me what you think of her and how she appears. Have you heard from Amantha? Is it not strange? I believe the fact is that she is ashamed to disturb the romantic story of "Love's Young Dream." What a contrast her former letters would present to those she would write now. The one redolent of tender distresses and romantic visions, the other of odious matrimonial felicity with that widower of hers. Who will ever uphold the doctrine of "first love" again? . . .

I would give my eyes to see the children, I am glad that I love home so well that no pleasure is greater than returning to it, and most certainly there never was on every account a more delightful family than the one I am in. My love to your dear Father and Mother and to all Uncle Ather-ton's family. I felt most sensibly reproached at what Mother wrote me about Aunt Kent's staying home to nurse Ellen. Her example reads me a severe lesson upon selfishness. I don't allude to any particular instance but I invariably considered it a great bore to pay her any attention. I believe my conscience is particularly tender when I am away from home, I am quite sure my feelings on some subjects are. Ma's letter made me quite unhappy, I can't bear to have them think ill of me when I am absent, but this is all nonsense. I shall write to Ma before William comes to ask for whatever I wish her to send me. My love to Aunt

Nancy and ask her to write to me by the bundle that Ma will send. (Another peal of laughter) I find that their mirth is occasioned by an elegant drawing of Jane's (who is just beginning to learn) which when it was exhibited to Aunt Mason she mistook the magnificent castle for a cottage and the great arched entrance for a hay-stack. Do you hear often from Edward? I wish you to attend to what I say that I expect you will write me *everything*. You know I shan't be satisfied with less.

Yours M. J. MEANS.

Aunt Appleton to Aunt Mason.

AMHERST, Nov. 28, 1833.

Thanksgiving Eve.

My Dear Sister,

Here in the bed room sits our dear Mother, and myself, she is reading while I am commencing a letter to you. Aunt Betsy has retired for the night and there is no other in the house. I should sooner have acknowledged your excellent letter, but various avocations prevented — the only important one worth mentioning was the making of Mother's cloak which I have completed and it is a very handsome one. She is much pleased with it and has paid me full *wages* for the work. . . .

You have ere this, I presume, heard that Mrs. Kent has had a letter from her daughters at Lexing-

ton. They had a fatiguing journey. The day that Robert left them at New York in the Steam Boat for Baltimore was the most anxious, and desolate for they felt they were alone. They arrived at three o'clock A. M. at Baltimore and enquired immediately for Dr. Holland, who came to them and caused their baggage to be put on board a stage and started with them again at six. They were two days and nights in constant motion without rest. A part of their way they had some pleasant travelling companions — one in particular they mention as very attractive and pleasant, a Mr. Marsh from Exeter. They said they found their great box a good deal of trouble, as it was difficult to find a place for it on the stages, but they were there and safe and kindly received by Mr. Van Doven. Frances had gone immediately into the school where she was much needed and she had the offer of the first place in it and Mary was urged to go into the same school, but she thought she should prefer being in a private family. They should not decide at once and should write again, as soon as they had time to make their determination. Edward Spalding has written also from Lexington where he was when his cousins arrived. He is delighted with the country and the people to whom he took letters. Had several offers to take schools and thought he should remain within a few miles of Lexington as teachers were in great demand. He wrote that he passed several days in Cincinnati and was with R. Means. The family

have had a letter from the latter since. He was well, but I can give no particulars. I am glad he has written. James, I presume, has received a letter from Edward Spalding, but has not written home since. He passed a week or ten days at Bangor as his school house was not ready when he arrived there. . . .

We have kept the little Irish girl who saved us some steps and is as merry as when you were here. She went home today but has come back again this evening as the family are all gone to Dr. Spalding's to pass the evening. Mrs. Spalding has had a woman to do her work about a week, but I understand she complains it is too hard and will stay but a few days longer. I am really sorry for Mrs. S. She is sadly troubled in this way as well as ourselves. Brother David has the prospect of a good man to do his work next week and it will be quite a relief, for he has had too many cares and too much to do for some weeks past. . . .

You have seen many accounts of the splendid meteoric phenomenon, they are in some of them very accurately described as I saw them. Jane mentions them as brilliant and constant, in all her ride to Nashua they illuminated the path. Mother wishes to retire and I must leave you and assist her. Good-night.

Your affectionate sister

E. APPLETON.

Mary Kent to Aunt Nancy.

[Lexington, Kentucky, probably 1835]

Monday eveng. Jan. 19th

I received from you my dear, a very kind postscript in one of Mother's letters, and two or three days since I've had a packet from Fanny dear, containing all the letters she has received since our separation—and yours was one of the number. I felt so much gratified with these marks of interest from you that I resolved to try to give you the same pleasure I had received, by writing and assuring you that I often think of you and look forward with as much impatience as yourself, to the time when we shall be seated in some of those pleasant parlors, giving to our friends those little sketches of our travels which will amuse them, and receiving in return those details of home affairs which can never cease to interest. . . . I wish you could have the benefit of this fine climate! We have not had more than four days this winter cold enough to shut my school-room door and my cloak is almost useless I find a shawl sufficiently warm. The grass is quite green, no snow, and have had none this winter that covered the ground. I rode five miles on horseback two or three days since and suffered no inconvenience from the cold. If you remember my dread of our winter weather you will not wonder at my admiration of a climate which relieves me from so much suffering, perhaps I should say discomfort.

What are you reading now? Every thing that is new I conclude finds its way to Amherst sooner or later either in the Reviews or in the Newspapers. I am sadly behind the age and have been often times reduced to sad straits in the literary way access at different times to Josephus and "Rollins Ancient History" "Lord Chesterfield" and such entertaining books. A few weeks since I was so fortunate as to make a friend of the Librarian at Lexington — and he does his best for me. He sent me the "Last Days of Pompeii" and I was perfectly fascinated with the beautiful description and the harmony of it all. Tell Charles he would have made a very capital Glaucus had he been born a Grecian, but as he had not that good fortune, give him an affectionate remembrance for himself and Ann from their cousin Mary. Tell Uncle Atherton I have lately been learning to build ice-houses where ice can be kept until September over here and I doubt not on the same plan we could keep it in New England through the winter if it should prove any object. I have likewise been instructed in the best manner of killing hogs. They have here the most primitive way of doing those things. The water is heated by throwing hot stones into it. Is that not a remnant of savage life? I would not have you infer that there is much that is barbarous here. I shall always think of my stay here with pleased and grateful feelings. For no one could have been treated with more kindness than I have been since my residence in Kentucky. . . .

How happy Abby and Mr. Means seem to be! I had a letter from them the other day which gave me great pleasure. I think I shall love my new brother exceedingly. I must close this epistle only begging you to remember me to all my friends. Tell A. A. S., darling as she is, that it is high time one of her letters was on the way "Westward Ho". Tell my dear Mother I am knitting her a pair of woolen stockings—Ann gave me the wool, it is not very nice but it will be warm. Adieu my dear Aunt, I shall always be happy to receive a letter from you, meantime believe me

Your affectionate niece,

MARY.

Aunt Appleton to Mary Aiken.

AMHERST, April 6th, 1835.

. . . The past week, my dear Mary, has been one of deep interest in this place. Religious meetings were commenced on Tuesday morning. The Vestry has indeed been a house of Prayer and the Meeting House has been well filled every day by those who were anxious to receive instruction from the Pulpit. Mr. Aiken has been assisted by the neighboring Clergymen who all seemed engaged in the one great object of winning souls to Christ. On Fast Day Mr. How of Pepperell preached. Mr. Magee of Nashua also was here on Friday and Saturday. They both labored as the disciples of

Christ. The Baptist Minister at Milford and the Methodist Minister in the neighborhood have united with the other Clergymen and seem of the same spirit. It would seem that the hearing of the Word preached and the Prayers and other religious instruction had been signally blessed. Several young men were seriously impressed by some remarks made to them by Mr. Aiken a fortnight since. It was a stormy evening and very bad walking and few but young men were there. One is now hoping that his sins are forgiven, he feels a peace of mind entirely new: others are enquiring with earnestness, fearing to hear instructions, and there are some who are bowed down with a sense of their guilt. I have never witnessed such a season here, of eagerness to hear a preached word and desire for the prayers of Christians. The Church or at least a part of the Church are awakened from their slumbers. My mother has required so much of my time and attention that I could only go out a few half days, but have staid with her and all the rest have gone. My dear nieces are deeply interested and unwilling to lose a season of so much instruction and I would on no account debar them the privilege of attending. Today has been our Communion. Mr. Eastman and Ruth Boutwell were added to the Church. A Clergyman from New Jersey preached. I heard him in the morning. The discourse was well adapted to the occasion and to the state of the people at the present time. The greater part of the congregation remained during the ordinance of the

Lord's Supper and few left the House during the short intermission, but occupied the season in conversation and prayer. I am in the way of hearing a good deal from the Dr. and from sister C. and her family and Mr. Aiken called last evening and gave me an account which should rejoice the heart of every Christian. I would gladly write much, but it is time for me to retire. The meetings is to be continued through tomorrow and then suspended, as the Auction commences on Tuesday and other public occasions occur this week.

I have thought much of my dear Jane, and wished that she could be under the influence of the Spirit which has operated so powerfully here. Still I am sensible that in every place God is to be found when he is sought for and Oh may a Divine influence operate on all our hearts, which shall constrain us to come and accept the offers of salvation with humble and contrite hearts. . . .

Mr. Aiken is, I conclude, at Manchester and your care and responsibility of course increased by his absence, but I hope all will go on well and the dear children be healthy and good. Mr. Pierce was perfectly delighted with little Willie. He says he never saw so lovely and interesting a child before. Helen is very desirous to go to Lowell to see him before he grows up. Kiss them all for your affectionate Mother,

E. APPLETON.

My Grandmother to Aunt Ellis.

AMHERST, March 8, 1836

My dearest Ellis:

It is a week today since you went to Salem and I suppose this will find you still happily situated with your dear Aunt French, but as we are quite ignorant of your plans I determined to write and enquire into them. . . . I am trying to get Eliza prepared to go away to school, have done several things but there are yet many to do. I find it takes not a little preparation for the first remove of a child from home, as most of those articles which have answered very well at home are not such as you wish to send abroad. If you find time to make her a collar, or cape, or bag it will do her a favor and you may charge the materials to me. Catharine says that collars as large as the neck of the gown are much worn.

I long to hear from you, my darling, and through you from your aunt and her family. Do not hurry your visit but enjoy it and do not attempt to travel when the roads are dangerous. Write to me immediately for it seems a long time since I have heard from you. Your letter to Catharine I did not see, but was happy to hear that you were well and I judged in good spirits as your letter appeared to amuse her exceedingly. . . . This season my dear child brings many serious and solemn recollections, but I endeavor to occupy myself with the present and hope in the future, but when I bring

the many and trying events of the last 15 months before my mind in a moment of time, it is almost overwhelming, but it is not what I have suffered that I would dwell upon, for God has granted me the greatest of all consolations and I know that all my dear children cherish the memory of their beloved father with the most perfect reverence and affection but you cannot adequately estimate your loss in this tender and watchful guide and protector, but I trust you do realize that thus berieved a double share of watchfulness is necessary on your own part. Good night my dear Ellis, the children have just come in. If you can purchase two pocket handkerchiefs cheap, I wish you would. All send love

Your mother

C. MEANS.

My Grandmother to Uncle Lawrence.

May 30, 1837

My dear sir:

James came on Friday and brought with him the very good and pretty rug you were so kind as to send me and for which you have my most hearty thanks, it adds one more to the many mementoes of your unwearied kindness which are around us and which we ever look upon with gratitude and pleasure. I wish, my dear sir, your health would permit you to take a ride into the country and make

us a little visit. I do assure you few things would delight us as much and everything in our power to make you comfortable should be done. May we not hope for this pleasure? True the old mansion is shut against you, but mine is open and our beloved friends will be as truly welcome here as they ever were there. Mother continues quite well but impatient to be in Boston, this appears to arise in some measure from the scattered state of her wardrobe but more from feeling unsettled. She longs to feel at home, to have her things and self in an abiding place for the time that now remains for her on earth and to be free from the little cares which will continue to attach themselves to her while she remains near her former residence. This is extremely natural and she does not express it unpleasantly at all but has uniformly been kind and cheerful and her visit has given us the greatest pleasure and satisfaction. I cannot but look on her with entire admiration — at her age to undertake and go through what she has and with unwavering resolution and cheerfulness is new evidence of the uncommon strength of mind and force of character that few possess. I shall feel sad at parting with her and hope she will return in the fall to make me a visit as she now gives me some encouragement she will.

James left us this morning for Andover and Dr. Spalding intends starting for Boston after dinner to attend the medical meeting, there is some probability that he may return through Salem, but

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should he decide to come directly home I wish Eliza to come with him, she has already exceeded the time I allowed her to remain and we are very impatient to see her. Mother has gone to call on Mrs. Clark or she would join me in love to your dear wife and family and to all the dear ones at No. 144. Your entire restoration to health is the most earnest desire of

Your affectionate sister

C. MEANS.

Aunt Nancy to Her Nieces.

AMHERST, N. H. August 19th '38

For the

Misses Means—

It is not that I have been thoughtless of you my dear *Nieces*, or that I love you less than when you were present, that there has been no communication from me & I will omit to name any reason, with the assurance that you are and ever must be, very dear to me. . . .

In Madam De Genlis' book on female Education (if I rightly remember) the child of 8 years has the direction & care of one still younger, on the principle that to influence others she must necessarily learn to govern herself, & a deep sense of personal responsibility would exalt & dignify her character. I cannot but smile at the idea of Helen or Rebecca acting the governess & disciplinarian,

however it might do for either of you. It must have a good effect on our minds to realize, that we *can do* much & that, what we do, is of consequence! It is an inspiring motive, & if the mind is not weak enough to be inflated unreasonably will "add dignity to virtue". We are in a measure, trained by circumstances. I have been—but let me not refer to self, always an unprofitable illustration. . . .

I have a high respect for Mr. Adams, he is quite delightful in the family circle, & seems not to have "narrowed his mind—to party given up, What was meant for mankind."

I wish very much to learn something of dear James. Abba S. means if possible to go to Lowell & attend his commencement. I should be delighted to go with her:—where will he preach first? I hope he will come directly here. I hear William commended as a "fine fellow" but have not seen him since M Jane left. The time of your return will be a jubilee to me & I hope it is not far distant, it is the only point to which my heart turns with unmixed delight. I can think of nothing interesting—the Court, will assemble many agreeable people, & I hope we shall profit by their society. It will give me great pleasure to hear from you, but do not feel compelled to write if it is inconvenient. Chs. is in fine health & very delightful. I wish I could meet you at Salem, dear Kate, but I have no such expectation.

It is bad policy to write a circular for no one feels particularly obliged. I was puzzled to know

who to address, for my eye rested on an old favor of Elizas. If mine has any interest it will be equally valuable & I wish you would each consider it a particular mark of affection to herself for such I intend it to be.

With a friendly remembrance to Miss Read and Miss Boylston, I am dear Catharine Ellis & Eliza

Yours affectly

N. H. ATHERTON.

Aunt West to William Gordon, Junior.

AMHERST, Sept. 1st, 1838.

My dear Son,

I received yours very soon after it was written and altho' it informed me of no very extraordinary event, it gave me most sincere pleasure. I thought I would not reply to it, till I had concluded about going to Lowell. I have now made up my mind to go. I have felt great repugnance to going in the Stage and alone too, but Mr. Adams and Abba S. are going on Monday and I shall go with them. I think they attend the anniversary exercises at Andover. James Means takes his degree and I suppose several of the Friends will be there. Mr. Means and Abba among the rest, but I can stay quietly till they return at night. Mary Jane will be there and she will meet Mr. A. for the first time since she consented to become his future wife and madam of the Parish! This is news to you? So it

is to us here, it having been known scarcely a week, a letter from James congratulating Mr. A. on the desired event, the latter disclosed at the Doctor's where he has most comfortable lodgings. Altho' Abba knew enough to anticipate the result, she whispered it to no one. It is more praiseworthy and remarkable, as all her friends designated her as the chosen one and were constantly teasing her about it. I like Mr. Adams well, — he is a pleasant companion, sings a good song and is, I believe, an interesting orthodox preacher. . . . The article I alluded to is in the "Edinburgh" for April. Lord Broughams name is not to it but 'tis his. He wrote it. 'Tis Mostly on the "abuse of the Press" and a severe censure of a book written by a Lady and a vindication of Queen Caroline.

Carlisle's works are more talked of here than any other. . . .

I hope, dear son, that you have already or are seeking an opportunity to dispose of the red house.

Most affectionately,

F. WEST.

Robert Means, Junior, to Uncle Lawrence.

LOWELL, July 11, 1840

Dear Sir:

Your very acceptable present of the "Head and shoulders" of our best friend [bust of Amos Lawrence still in the old house at Amherst] was recd.

safe and in good order, yesterday morning, nothing could have given us more pleasure. To have our best and kindest friend sit by our side to look upon us with his most happy smile, will always admonish us to be happy, to be charitable, to be good, to be liberal and to love the whole human family. On the other side of our little breakfast room is my old patron and early friend returning the cheerful smile. How happy we all were last evening with Mrs. Kent, Eleanor Chase, Mrs. Appleton, Mrs. Peirce and the Rev. Mr. Adams and Mary Jane at the tea table and afterwards Mr. and Mrs. Aiken, you may conceive, but I am not able to express by words. We think it in a better light than we have at any time seen it in Boston and admire it more and more. You will accept, my dear friend, our warmest thanks and our best wishes that you may live long to be a blessing as you have heretofore been to all your friends and you yourself reap and enjoy the rich rewards of grateful hearts.

The figs you kindly sent by Mrs. Lawrence were excellent such as our stores do not afford.

Tell Nancy we love her dearly and are as happy as we deserve to be.

Yours most truly,

R. MEANS.

A. A. Means to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST,

Saturday July 5, 1851

My dear friend:

Your letter and George Copnay's prospectus with twenty-five ! profiles of Gen. Washington, have just come — the latter were a suitable accompaniment to your fourth of July remark ! What a blessed thing if the spirit that actuated that great and good man would circulate as freely through our whole nation again uniting the North and South in the bonds of harmony. Many thanks for the stamps which are not yet to be had in the country stores or post offices. The number you sent *ought* to establish the habit of prepaying which seems under the present law to be a part of "our duty to our neighbour." . . .

Mr. Marston (late Consul at Palermo) was here for a few days last week and Mr. and Mrs. Fuller Wallace of Syracuse. If we only had some *springs* do you not think we could make something of Amherst as a watering place? But then we should lose the pleasure which we now enjoy so highly, that of thinking you and other distinguished people come *expressly to see us*.

Mother sits beside me reading your "Sunny Side" the remembrance of your visit still cheers her heart. I think much of your great visit to Williamstown and wish it were well over. Dr. William does well to accompany you, it will be a new pleasure to see

you there among the mountains with two *chosen* friends at your side and grateful hearts all around you "heigh Sirs! but this is a great occasion" as Willie Laidlaw said to Scott. I only fear that the great attractions of Little Nahant will incline Dr. Lawrence to be more in haste than I should like for you on so long a journey, but the dear lady will arrange all that with her usual admirable discretion. . . .

I expect to start early on Monday and breakfast with Dr. Edward at Nashua who goes as far as Concord with us. At Nashua I hope to meet the Boston party and reach the Flume House the same evening.

Ever your affectionate friend

A. A. MEANS.

Aunt Nancy to William Gordon, Junior.

AMHERST, N. H. April 17, 1853.

My dear Nephew,

Since you were here Mr. & Mrs. White have come into the House as tenants, and are disposed to do all they can to promote my comfort. I propose continuing with them, (unless the property should be sold) feeling that independence is desirable, and seeing no friend exactly situated to have my presence give them more pleasure than trouble. . . .

The week past Mrs. McGregor & Mrs. Robert Appleton with each a little girl, passed a day here

— Mrs. Appleton with me & it was truly soothing and comforting, her sweet Madona face & pure mind convey intuitive trust—for she has been tried in the furnace of affliction & is a beautiful example of the power of religion. . . .

The little Irish girl you so kindly inquire for, has left me this day much to my regret & her own. She was pleasant and useful & would make an estimable woman with my training, but she will be put into a cotton mill I dare not predict. I presume the influencing motive of her parents is to have her under the teachings of a Catholic priest.

. . . My health is better & I have to take great care of my heart to keep it so, & with that motive I will only add

Yrs very affectly

N. H. ATHERTON.

CHAPTER VII

THIRD GENERATION: ATHERTON

Of the second generation of the two families whose fortunes we are following my knowledge comes largely through letters and stories that have been told me. I never saw any of the older members of the Atherton family, and Aunt Nancy's Journal furnishes the most complete account of them that we have. But I have now come to the time when I can write more or less from my own personal knowledge of the third generation. Did not my father and my aunts and uncles belong to this generation? Is not this, above all, the generation of Cousin Abba, around whom all my Amherst recollections centre? And in later years it was many of this generation who signed the paper asking me to write of Amherst.

Of the nine children of David and Catharine Means, not one died while they lived in Amherst. But heavy sorrows came to the Spaldings and Athertons. Of Aunt Spalding's children, George, who was an interesting and promising young man, was killed on the homeward voyage from Manila, where he had gone for his health, by a fall from a mast of the ship. Charles H. Atherton lost two sons, George and James H. George died when he was in his seventeenth year; James was a young man of unusual promise, greatly beloved and

mourned by his family when in 1837 news came of his untimely death in New York, whither he had gone to begin his business career. Aunt Nancy's references to him in her Journal are very touching, and show with what tenderness his memory was cherished.

Singularly enough, the three daughters of Robert Means, also, each lost a son of great promise in their very young manhood: Alfred Mason, William Appleton and Robert Lawrence. William Appleton and his cousin Mary Jane Means were deeply attached to each other and would probably have married had he lived. He and her brother, Robert Means, had gone to Cincinnati to seek their fortunes. The letters of the mothers, Elizabeth Appleton and Catharine Means, testify to the deep sorrow his death occasioned in both families. One is much struck with the youth of the men of those days, who nevertheless were men of character and performance no less than of promise in their future. William Appleton was barely twenty-two when he died, but we read that he had graduated at Bowdoin College, and had also studied law before he went to Cincinnati. Of the others, James Atherton was twenty-four when he died, George Spalding was twenty, and Robert Lawrence, nineteen. Alfred Mason, like James Atherton, was twenty-four at the time of his death, and like him had gone to New York to establish himself in business.

But before these sorrows fell on the families in Amherst, many letters tell us of the pleasant times

the cousins had together there. The letters, also, of the mothers to their daughters who were away at school show pictures of the home life of the different families and the kind of advice mothers were apt to give their daughters in those days. And the social centre formed in Amherst by the children of David and Catharine Means, of Doctor and Mrs. Spalding, of Mrs. Appleton, and of Charles H. Atherton was greatly enjoyed, also, by the cousins who came to visit here from Chester, Portsmouth, and Boston.

Of Charles H. Atherton's children only two survived him: a daughter, Mary Ann, and a son, Charles Gordon. Mary Ann, in spite of delicate health, was a woman of great personal charm, and her cousins were deeply attached to her. One becomes intimate with her through Aunt Nancy's Journal and through the many references to her in her cousins' letters, which give one a realizing sense of how large a place she filled in the social life of the town. She seems to have had the distinction of being the only member of any of the families of that generation that had the slightest musical taste, and she owned a piano which still exists in Amherst. She never married and she died in 1853 when she was forty-two years old. A letter she wrote to Aunt Nancy preserves the charm of her personality:

AMHERST, N. H., April 17th, 1828.

Having been defeated in a most brilliant plan for

a ride on horseback this fair morning, by my *gallant's* being most *ungallantly* detained in Court, to hear a very interesting cause, I have taken "that mighty instrument of little men" and little women too, I suppose, "my gay goose quill" into the hand, before destined to guide my steed (I wish I could say my *spirited steed*, which would both look and sound very pretty, but my regard for truth, sacred truth, restrains me) with the intention of writing a few lines to you my dear Aunt Nancy, desiring that if my letter should be stupid and tiresome, and all that sort of thing, you will attribute it to the chagrin and mortification, it is natural I should feel, that my beau should prefer hearing any case, however important, to the pleasure of my company. Alas! the days of Chivalry are past. What would Richard Cœur de Lion and his Norman nobles say to this age of *civilization* and *refinement*.

Aunt Catharine requests me to mention to you the death of Alfred Mason. His friends are all in deep affliction. Mr. Mason is quite unmanned by this shock, the first of the kind he has ever received. Alfred died at New York. George hastened on immediately upon hearing of his illness, but did not reach there until he was in a state of derangement. The fever is considered infectious, therefore he will be interred at New York. Is not it melancholy that this young man so highly gifted, so promising, and so enthusiastic in his profession, that he almost set death at defiance, should so early have fallen its victim?

I am happy to hear Anne Crosby intends to favor me with a visit. She has promised me one for several years past. I hope she will now appear "in propria persona" and make her word good. Tell her if she thinks she can exist a few weeks in this most stupid of all places, she shall be most welcome. We are unusually dull here, no parties,—they are regarded as the climax of extravagance, no walks or rides, at least until we have rain, for we ladies have some slight regard for our eyes and would fain preserve them from "that chartered libertine, the wind and his bore of a companion, the dust" so we all stay at home and keep the parlour in order—are quite domestic. How unlike my Salem visit where I trip it "on the light fantastic toe" every evening for three weeks. I wish you to ascertain and write me at what time I may expect Anne, for I have several engagements in the course of the summer and will plan them accordingly.

Weddings here are the order of the day. "Miss Claggett proves that all of that name are not obliged to retain it forever" (I quote William Appleton) by giving her hand to Mr. Carlton at the *hour of seven* next Monday Morning. Miss Kendall follows so good an example in the course of the week and Jane Spalding too a fortnight from next Tuesday.

We wish to see you on your return to Chester very much and shall consider it nothing less than the cut direct (or more properly perhaps the cut

roundabout) if you return by the way of Concord. Aunt C. wishes you to visit and hopes you will consider this as the invitation for which you were so ceremonious as to wait.

Yours affectionately,

MARY ANN T. ATHERTON.

The son, Charles Gordon, was born in 1804 and graduated from Harvard in 1822. He studied law, and began the practice of his profession in 1825 at Nashua. At about the same time he was married to Anne B. Clarke, a granddaughter of the Reverend Jeremiah Barnard, who was the minister at Amherst for many years. She was a woman of considerable beauty, as her designation as "the beautiful Miss Clarke" attested. She had a somewhat marked taste in dress, to judge from the allusions to her in letters; and certain eccentricities of mind which showed themselves both before and after the death of her husband somewhat clouded her relations with his family. That she idealised her husband after his death, however it may have been in his lifetime, is quite evident. They had no children. Charles G.'s character was not such as to endear him to his family, and some time before his marriage he had managed to offend only too justly the sensibilities of his Amherst cousins, who were not willing to receive his visits. A letter from him to Aunt Nancy shows his resentment at his cousins' determination to have as little

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to do with him as possible; while letters from Aunt Kent and Aunt Mary Jane show with what enthusiasm they hailed his engagement to Miss Clarke. He never, however, became the "pillar of society" of Aunt Kent's vision.

Charles G. Atherton to Aunt Nancy.

AMHERST, N. H.

Oct. 10, 1822

Dear Aunt:

Having now an opportunity of writing to you, I wish I could find something to say worth the trouble of reading a letter. But the age of novelty and news is past — things run on in the same worn and wearisome channel, and people live now by mathematics and I believe (God help me) die pretty much the same way. Thus, the most interesting information for news which I have to give you is that I am alive and hope you are enjoying the same blessing; that Lucretia Clagett came home from Portsmouth the other day polished so bright and decked so gorgeously that she looks like a walking prism and that Dr. Conway is dead.

It is so long since I have seen or spoken to a lady that I declare I have forgotten how to make a bow. It may be said of them (ladies) here with truth enough that "their houses are their castles" and Heaven forgive his rashness who would attempt to storm them. The only way, I am convinced, is to

blockade and starve them out, for when they cannot get anything to eat at home then they will visit their neighbours. I hope you find somebody to speak to once in a while at Marblehead. Do you know of any dumb people there? If so, send them here for they will get along better, not having any tongue to use than those who have one and cannot use it.

I presume you have heard of G. Kent's accident. He is now I believe running about again. Mrs. Kent did not pay us her expected visit but Gen. Derby and Hasket were here at our famous Cattle Shows.

You see that I have been able to write nothing but nonsense, therefore, as it is very late I had better stop after desiring my love to Aunt French and assuring you that I am

Your truly affectionate Nephew

CH. G. ATHERTON.

Aunt Mary Jane to Aunt Nancy.

AMHERST

December 20, 1827

My dear Aunt:

I've had your welcome letter about five minutes and forthwith am set down to answer it. One piece of news I have to communicate strikes me as sufficiently important to be placed first—Is Charles (you ask) desperately in love with Miss

Clarke? He is engaged to Miss Clarke. He came up on Thanksgiving day and communicated this interesting intelligence and brought Mr. Clarke's letter which was a very handsome and complimentary one, giving his "free, full and undivided consent." Miss Clarke is spending the winter in Boston, whither Charles directed his course on Tuesday last. Mary Ann went with him. This I need not tell you meets with the approbation of everybody concerned. She is without doubt a very fine girl and has received a first rate education. She has beside (and it is no small consideration with Charles) an uncommonly fine person. Miss Lucretia complains a little that Ann should be such a fool, but satisfies her conscience by declaring that she did all she could to prevent it, which is I believe a fact. Robert has been Chas' confidant through the whole affair and has delivered all the letters. I think a poetical effusion addressed to Chas from your pen would not be amiss, disposed as he at present is, to be pleased with all and everything.

Uncle Atherton is in fine health and spirits and comes in to see us very often. He misses Mary Ann very much, but she will not be gone many weeks. Elizabeth French is with us and so is Abba Kent, we have had no late news from M. Head. The children do not forget you. The little girls and William go to an excellent private school kept by a classmate of William Appleton's, his name is Meriam. We can't make a beau of him unfortunately. James has been at home and we have had

a very fine time; with all our own family and so many strange ladies and William Appleton as an additional beau.

James Atherton, E. Spalding and James Means have been carrying on quite a flirtation with Elizabeth. Mary is coming here week after next. Mary Appleton is going to Maine next month. My love to Aunt and Mr. G. I wish Mr. G. would write for I have a great curiosity to see his copy hand. Mr. Carleton has been in town. Christopher Thayer was in town just before Mary Ann left. Robert and William Appleton have been to Hillsborough to see the governor. I've nothing more to say, except to send oceans of love to you from all the family.

Yours M. JANE MEANS.

Aunt Kent to Her Sisters.

CHESTER. Dec. 15, 1827.

My dear Sisters,

I thought the time very long before I heard from you and cannot even now feel comfortable when I think of the inconvenience and exposure you were subject to—. We're hoping you are both, and William likewise, feeling all the pleasure that I do from Cousin Charles's engagement to the amiable and beautiful Miss Clark. I shall discuss this fertile subject first. I suppose you have heard all the particulars, but it is better to recapitulate in such

a case than leave the mind unsatisfied. This from Abba — Charles offered himself after Abba went to Amherst. The young lady acknowledged her preference, but must consult her guardian. She went to Boston where the curse of the poem blazed afresh, and all the sins of youth were called up, till the virtuous girl resolved at whatever sacrifice of feeling, she would never connect herself with a Libertine attachment. This (as we suppose) brought Charles to take a more melancholy and correct retrospect than he had ever taken before — presuming on the strength of woman's love and his own recently correct life, he ascertained the character of her guardian and wrote a most eloquent letter to him, referring him for his character to Messrs. Haven, French, Abbot and Dr. Thayer. This had the desired effect. A fortnight brought him a highly gratifying letter from the guardian and one equally so from the young lady. Now only think of the happy group at Dr. Spalding's on Thanksgiving Day. Abba Kent had received a note from Charles in the morning giving her the important information. Brother and family to dine with 'Becca. When drinking wine Brother communicated the intelligence which was received with unfeigned pleasure. In a few minutes Charles walked in, dressed in a new suit, holding a letter in his hand and in every respect a picture of happiness. Oh, I wish I could have been present! After receiving the congratulations of all present, his Father asked what he had in his hand. He

answered "a sermon." Abba asked what text. "Well done good and faithful servant," and presented it for perusal. It was the Uncle's letter saying he was perfectly satisfied with regard to his character and would most cheerfully resign his beloved Niece to his protection — wishing for his acquaintance and friendship. Happy, happy Charles! This was accompanied by one from Miss Clarke, not to be read, I suppose, but requesting his visit should be made in Boston, where she is boarding, Ballou, I believe the name. But to picture the happy group! Robert, James and Amos joining them — Robert has been the confidant and his good heart afforded him nearly as much delight on the occasion as he could feel were he himself the hero. James came over last evening to pass this day with us. Says he never saw his Uncle look so happy and Mary Ann is to accompany him to Boston in his first visit, which I suppose is made ere this. I cannot express to you the pleasure this event gives me & I can but ill define it myself, such a combination of circumstances goes to make up the great satisfaction I feel. Miss Clarke is amiable, sensible, well educated, beautiful. I indulge a presentiment that she will be a crown to her husband and then I see Charles becoming a pillar in society, attending to business, practicing virtuous habits and loving all things that are of good report, and then the comfort to our dear Brother to have this all important event to Charles, to all human foresight, so happily decided. Mary

Ann so much attached to Miss Clarke! But this is not all — I have most sincerely desired to see the day when the evils which clouded Charles in consequence of writing that ill fated poem should pass away. I know his offence was great, but surely the feeling it excited has been revengeful and unrelenting. He has suffered and repented. I do rejoice that prosperity and virtue are so sweetly calling "Follow me". . . .

Write soon and be sure you do not suffer these days of Heaven's smiles — when we have comfortable health and peace and plenty and blessings too numerous to mention to pass without habitual acknowledgment, for this is wisdom and duty. I can only add I am with tenderest affection.

A. KENT.

Charles G. early engaged in politics, and identified himself with the Democratic Party to which he adhered throughout his life. He was elected to Congress, and in 1838 he introduced the "Gag Rule", which provided that all petitions for the abolition of slavery should be laid upon the table, and no further notice taken of them, — a curious position for the grandson of Joshua Atherton, who, so many years earlier, had been ready to oppose the ratification of the Federal Constitution because of its acknowledgment of slavery. From that time Charles was known by the nickname of "Gag Law Atherton." He was elected to the United States

Senate in 1843, and was still a member of that body at the time of his death in 1853. He and his father were opposed in politics, a situation which at times produced some friction between them as may be noted in the following letters. Charles H., as will be seen, took the position, which Lincoln later emphasized, that in a free country no extension of slavery was to be tolerated.

Wednesday 15 Jan'y 9 o'clock A. M.

Dear Charles,

This morning we awoke to a snowstorm after our sunny day & it still continues, the mercury 10 above zero.

By yours of the 9th I perceive you intend joining yourself with slave holders for the annexation of Texas. How any man who has taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States can say, it is competent for the Senate, House of Reps. & the President by an act of Legislation to admit a foreign territory into the Union, is more than I can comprehend. To do it by treaty would not be so bad for tho' in my opinion it would be unconstitutional, there is some apology for it in the admission of Louisiana. And to resume, that the people have given their assent to it because the states have chosen a president whose views are supposed to be in favor of it, is the height of political finatecism. Is it possible that in this indirect way, anybody is

at liberty to think the constitution is altered in this particular.

If there were no slaves in Texas, & the constitution permitted it, I should be opposed to its admission on the ground that our territory is sufficiently extended. The Government will soon break under or vanish by its own diffusions. What a House of Representatives we are to have in 20 years from this time! It will be so numerous that it will be a mob wholly incompetent to the regular transaction of business — it will cease to be a deliberative body, or the Representation must be so reduced that New Hampshire for instance, will be entitled to not more than one or two Representatives. Those who wish a separation of the Union, I advise to be in favor of annexation, for it will lay surely and irresistibly the foundation of Separation.

And altho' I did not entertain the foregoing views, I should say, that the admission of Slaves into the Union or any Act for the purpose of rendering the abolition of Slavery hopeless, was a violation of the Original Compact, between the slave holding and non slave holding States, so manifest and gross, so peculiarly affecting the political rights of the non slave holding states, as ipso facto, to absolve them from their allegiance.

We are unequally yoked with the slave states: but such as it is I am willing to abide by it. Let the Constitution still be supreme. But I would not budge an inch, towards increasing their preponderance, in derogation of those political rights

which as men we are entitled to; nor would I consent to anything which opposed the termination of that preponderance which natural causes might tend to bring about. No consideration should indure me to these things. These I fear are not views that will suit your political aspirations. They may not give you an ephemeral currency with a dominant party, they may not entitle you to immediate promotion to office. But they are views which I am satisfied will ere long meet the unanimous approbation of the non slave holding States, at any rate they are views which a man can well afford to live and die by, as I certainly shall, if God shall be pleased to spare me my senses.

Yours affectionately,

C. H. ATHERTON.

WASHINGTON CITY

February 17th 1845

My dear Father,

Your letter was received this morning and I do not marvel at your desire to know the author of the Report of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate on Texas. But if you had known Mr. Archer you could never have entertained a doubt. He is the only person in the world who could have written such a document & to him belongs the undivided honor of producing a State paper in many respects unequalled in history. The Galleries are

filled daily during the Texas debate. McDuffee is occupying a short time this morning — if after 12 may be called morning — in making a speech against the French claims. Woodbury is to speak on Texas after one o'clock.

As it regards the Oregon question, it is, I think, quite unfortunate that the notice to terminate the joint convention for occupation has not been given, as has been earnestly contended for by some, long ago, as it was bad policy either to enter into it or renew it. The only real danger of any war arises from the Oregon question. But I do not see how the Bill from the House affords any just cause of complaint to Great Britain. The outrageous assumption of Great Britain as to the Oregon can never be submitted to by this Country, if we have the spirit of an Independent Government. If Great Britain thinks best to get into a war with us she will do it — if she thinks otherwise she can avoid it & will. But it is no way to avoid a war with her to neglect to stand up manfully for our rights. Her claims and her aggressions always advance as her opponents recede.

Anne wrote to you a day or two since, & I suppose gave full information as to her health. I saw Mr. Polk on Friday last — he looks very well, only a little older than when I saw him last. Dallas is sitting a little distance from me. He is a slender erect man — about your height with a profusion of perfectly white hair.

Woodbury is now speaking on Texas, & is, I

think, making a very able speech, though his manner is much injured by straining his voice too much & forcing it into a kind of screech.

In haste yours affy

C G ATHERTON

Charles G. was an able man, and I am told his portrait hangs in the State Capitol at Concord. He was stricken with apoplexy while conducting a case in the courts at Manchester, and never spoke again save to say: "I expected this, but not so soon." His wife had these words inscribed upon his gravestone in Nashua. Many years later when I was visiting Cousin Abba in Amherst and perusing that "respectable daily" the "Boston Advertiser" one morning, my eye was caught by an advertisement of the Paine Furniture Company of Boston which was illustrated by a cut of some new piece of furniture, the advantages of which were in part set forth in the following words: "In the language on the tombstone of a statesman of New Hampshire, 'We expected this, but not so soon.'"

After the death of Charles G. Atherton, there were some words in the family concerning a portrait of his father, Charles H., painted by Gilbert Stuart. The sisters of Charles H., who were still living at that time, thought that Mrs. Charles G. should surrender it to one of them; but Mrs. Atherton did not agree, as the following letter which she wrote to Cousin Abba at the time shows:

NASHUA, Nov. 4, '54.

My dear Abby,

On my return from Amherst, I received a note from Aunt French, of Oct. 28, '54. It contained this paragraph. "I have a request to make of you my dear Anne, that I hope you will not refuse me. It is that you would give me my dear Brother's portrait. Of course, it belongs to the sisters and I do not know why I should not have it. You will see the justice of our having it, and will not refuse so reasonable a request. I do greatly desire to have it and I feel that your kind heart will respond, 'You shall have it Aunt French.'"

Now, my dear cousin, my head and my hands are too occupied to write Aunt French, besides I could not write, I could not speak upon this subject again. (Believe me I am now as cold as an icicle from emotion.) You heard just what I said in reply to Aunt Nancy. Will you write to Aunt French and tell her my convictions? I am so glad Aunt Nancy referred to this subject when she did. I trust there will never be another allusion to it.

Today is the anniversary of my last welcome to Charles to his home. Monday is our parting here. Dear, dear Abba would that you could have seen into my heart through this long dreary, my sad experience of the year.

I have so much enjoyed my visits to your home. I ever leave with a desire to repeat my visit. I

feel that you understand me and that is so gratifying. I would like so much to spend that one day with you if I could possibly reserve one, but I dare not hope.

My kindest love and respects to all to whom it is acceptable. Please remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Kent. I write amid interruption—in haste, but gratefully and affectionately,

Yours,

ANNE ATHERTON.

Mrs. Atherton kept the portrait, and after her death it came naturally into the possession of the executor of the estates of both Charles H. and Charles G. Atherton, Cousin Edward Spalding. For some years it hung in his house in Nashua, but after much reflection, he gave it to the town library in Amherst, where it hangs to-day for all who will to see it. This seemed a most appropriate disposition to make of the portrait as Charles H. Atherton had no direct descendants living, but many collateral relatives with an equal interest in the portrait who, from time to time, visited the town. Still, I think there is no good reason why Cousin Edward should not have kept the portrait himself, as he undoubtedly had more to do with the Athertons, father and son, than anyone else, and I tell the story only as an illustration of his scrupulous honor.

It is a pleasure to turn to Cousin Edward's

career from that of Charles G. Atherton. He was born in Amherst September 15, 1813, was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1833, married Miss Dorothy Everett Barrett of New Ipswich June 23, 1842, and took up the practice of medicine in Nashua, where he lived until his death in 1895. He was a man whose uprightness and integrity was such that all his friends looked up to and trusted him above other men. He was one of those men who strengthen one's confidence in the inherent goodness of human nature. He was a friend of my father, who was two years his junior; and he was an intimate friend, as well as cousin, of my Uncle James, they having been born the same year and grown up together at Amherst. Both were mighty fishermen, and long before roughing it was fashionable they often "took to the woods" on some far distant fishing expedition. Their favorite region was the Megalloway River and nearby lakes. Not only did they enjoy the fishing, but they took a great interest in their guides, who were the lumbermen of the country. It was through Cousin Edward's generosity that a chapel was built at Wilson's Mills. He was a charter member of the Parmachenee Club, and on his last visit to the wilderness, when he was eighty-two, in the company of his faithful guide, he was taken ill and died immediately. Mary and Dora Spalding of Boston are his daughters; his only son died before him.

Of the children of Rebecca Atherton and Doctor Matthias Spalding, the eldest to grow up was

Cousin Abba; then came Cousin Edward, and, last, Cousin Alfred, who was also a physician. Soon after getting his degree, Alfred Spalding betook himself to Greenupsburg, Kentucky, possibly drawn thither by the charms of Rebecca, daughter of Mr. Samuel Seaton, whom he married in May, 1846. The Seatons were an old Amherst family of Scottish ancestry who moved to Kentucky, where descendants of the name still live. Cousin Alfred continued to be a practising and much honored physician there until the end of his life. He was a skilful surgeon as well as physician, with a widely extended practise drawn from all the country round about. I have heard his son George say that he had seen his father perform with success a difficult and dangerous operation in a poor Kentucky cottage by the light of an oil-lamp which he, George, held; and later a New York medical journal reported, as an almost epoch-making performance, precisely the same operation performed by a noted New York surgeon with all the appliances of modern science at his command. Like all Spaldings, Alfred was a lover of horses, and as he lived in Kentucky, he owned and bred them. He was a man with the courteous manners of a gentleman of the old school. He came East the summer his son George married Rebecca Davis, and it was then I made his acquaintance. He was nearing the end of his life then, though we did not suspect it, and he died in December, 1878.

It was perhaps the loss of their only boy that

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led Cousin Edward Spalding and Cousin Dora to consider what good they could both do and get in connection with the education of Alfred's sons. At any rate, all three of the boys, one after the other, came East and were members of the family in Nashua, where they found the most affectionate care and a true home. Two of the sons, like their father and uncle, became physicians. Of George, who married his cousin Rebecca Davis, I shall write elsewhere. He was the first to come East, and for a time went to school in Nashua, then to Phillips Academy, Andover, and to Yale, where he was graduated in 1872. Alfred, the second son, after his school days in Nashua, went to Dartmouth, and then, as George had done, studied his profession at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, where they both practised until their death. Alfred's wife, a Canadian, had been a nurse before their marriage, and in the Great War returned to her profession. Her father was a general in the Canadian Army, and, as nurse, she rose to the rank of lieutenant. She, with her daughter, lives in Ottawa. The third son, Sam, is a New York business man; he married Miss Clara Lupton, and lives in Montclair with his wife and two little girls. His two unmarried sisters, Helen and Rebecca, also live in New York. In Aunt Spalding's family, as in her father's, Joshua Atherton's, there is no male descendant to perpetuate the name.

Aunt Kent, who lived her married life in Chester, had nine children, six boys and three girls. Of

George, and of Abigail who married Robert Means, Junior, I write in my later chapter on "The Other House." Charles, Philip and Joshua died unmarried; Frances, after her marriage to a Mr. Smith of Washington, had no further connection with Amherst; Amos and Frederick both married and settled in the South, where Amos is said to have left a hundred descendants. The second daughter, Mary, who was engaged at one time to Mr. Felton, afterwards President of Harvard, married James McGregor, of Boston, a nephew of Mary McGregor, wife of the first Robert Means. The McGregors had three daughters. Fanny never married although she was a brilliant and remarkable woman of such personal charm that few could resist her. When she was only twenty-seven, she was accidentally killed at North Conway while she was shooting at a target with some companions. Mary McGregor, who married Charles Dalton, had no children; and Leslie, Mrs. Frank Morison, has three—J. McGregor, Mrs. Clifton Bremer and Mrs. Frank Grinnell.

The family of my grandparents, Catharine Atherton and David McGregor Means, I have recorded in another chapter.

Elizabeth, the youngest daughter of Joshua Atherton, Aunt French, lived in Salem and in Marblehead, where her two sons, George and Charles were born. Charles later lived in Boston, where he had a prosperous business college; while George settled in Manchester, and later married Miss Louise

Fabens of Salem. His daughter, another Elizabeth Atherton, "Cousin Bessie," married my brother, Charles, and, after his death, Doctor George D. Towne. She and her two daughters, my nieces, Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Perkins, still live in Manchester. Cousin George French came to Manchester to live when I was still a little girl. As his parents were growing old, he built a house there to make a home for them and himself, and later for his wife and sister. Cousin George was very popular with his young cousins. He was the city clerk, and had an office in the city hall. Now though I was naturally a shy child, I was the reverse of that when I knew my ground, and I was very fond of calling upon my friends. So often when I and my troop of younger brothers and sisters found ourselves near the city hall, I would say "Let's go up and call on Cousin George," and up the stairs we would mount to his office. We must have been a great nuisance, but he always treated us like most welcome guests, and conversed with us as politely as if we had been "truly invited." Fortunately our visits were always short. I adored the lady he married, "Cousin Louise," a woman with the largest heart and clearest head and most genial personality that one could imagine.

CHAPTER VIII

THIRD GENERATION: MEANS

The Atherton sisters never let Amherst go, and by frequent visits and letters kept a place there. But Aunt Mason and Aunt Lawrence, daughters of Robert Means, were never a part of the Amherst life after they married, although Aunt Lawrence, in letters to her husband, gives a lively account of some of her visits there. And she had no children to join the company of cousins as Robert, her son, died, as I have said, when he was a student at Harvard; and Aunt Mason's descendants have had no direct relation with Amherst, beyond, perhaps, a day's visit to the town.

But Aunt Appleton, after the death of her husband, President Appleton of Bowdoin, came back to Amherst and made her home at the "Farm" where her father had established her, and her children belonged to the delightful company of cousins of whom we read in many letters of the time. I think, from what I can gather from the old records, that some time after the death of Robert Means the first, Aunt Appleton went from the Farm to live with and care for her mother in the old house, which would account for her three daughters being married there—Frances to Professor Alpheus S. Packard, Jane to Franklin Pierce and Mary to John Aiken. I will just mention here that

of the sons William Appleton, died when a young man; and Robert married my Aunt Rebecca, the youngest daughter of David Means. Their two children are Mrs. Schunemann, who has no children, and Mrs. Charles Jackson. The Pierces were to lose their son in the most tragic circumstances; of the four children born to the Packards only one, Alpheus, has descendants.

A letter from Aunt Lawrence to her husband and one from Aunt Mary Jane to Cousin Abba describe the Packard and Pierce weddings. I wish I had an account of the marriage of Mary Appleton to Mr. Aiken, but none has come my way.

Aunt Lawrence to Her Husband.

AMHERST, May 24, 1827

My dear Husband:

The important ceremony is over and Frances left us today at 12 o'clock. Johnson would give you intelligence of our arrival in good season and in health on Monday. Robert was rather tired of riding and did not very well like the confinement of a carriage, but Mary was perfectly happy all the way and seemed to feel quite at home after she got here, and has on the whole been less trouble to me than I expected. Robert is afraid of strangers and will not let any of the family tend him, which they regret very much, for they all pronounce him a wonderfully clever fellow! Mr. Pack-

ard arrived with his brother, Doctor, on Tuesday in the forenoon and yesterday Doctor Welles came in the stage; and notwithstanding the weather was so stormy we made quite a large family party at brother David's at tea.

This morning looked rather unpropitious, but at ten o'clock our company assembled and in addition to the immediate family connexions were Mr. and Mrs. Lord and Mrs. Boynton, Doctor and Mrs. Spalding and their daughter, and Miss N. Ather-ton. Jane Mason and Jane Appleton were bridesmaids and Doctor Welles and Doctor Packard groomsmen. F. looked very well and Mr. P. very happy. Brother Robert and wife will accompany them as far as Center Harbour taking the New Hampshire Lake in their route. If the weather is good they will return on Tuesday. They were also accompanied by 5 chaises filled with our young folks as far as Parkers in Bedford (about eleven miles) they will return here to tea and tomorrow morning the two young Doctors and Robert Appleton leave us in the stage. Mrs. Mason sent home her man when she came and he was to come again next Tuesday, but we persuaded her to write for them not to send until Thursday unless there should be some particular reason. Of course there is some probability you may see my mother and her yet for I shall look for you on Thursday unless I hear to the contrary.

I suppose you all miss the children very much and Amos and Susanna will not be sorry to meet

them half way. Mrs. Appleton is just putting up a slice of wedding cake for you and the children, and also one for the folks in the kitchen which Robert will take the charge of. Fanny desired me to give her love to you particularly.

Did Mr. Mason go from Salem to Boston this week. Mrs. M. said he was going to the former place and perhaps might go to B. I thought you would like his company very well. My cold affects my head just enough to make me feel very stupid. But notwithstanding that I would have written this a little better if I had a penknife to mend my pen. I hope all goes on well at home, give my love to the children and believe me your ever affectionate wife,

NANCY.

Aunt Mary Jane to Cousin Abba.

[Probably November, 1834]

AMHERST, Friday Evening.

My dear Abba, Did I promise to write to you so soon! No I am sure I did not! Therefore am I more particularly to be admired for my promptness, which being neither promised nor expected rises into something more than a mere plebeian debt and credit virtue. I have pleased myself ever since I began to write by fancying how much it would increase your respect for me, and I beg you will immediately sit down and assure me that

you are sensible of my merit. But one can't dwell upon their own perfections forever, and I am sure you are dying to hear something about this little village which *dull* and *disagreeable* as they call it, must always be *dear* and *delightful* to you & me, — "Lives there the man," window seats and moonlight and all that! Uncle Robert and Abba will tell you that I kept up my spirits to the last moment, indeed, I kept them up longer than the last moment, for I was actually so absurd as to attempt to be agreeable in the stage. Conceive of my auditors! Aaron with his wife, her face all bound up in consequence of ague; poor Jane feeling too feeble to exert herself, and Robert who at first encouraged me, soon obliged to surrender to the pains and penalties of riding on the back seat. Of course I had nothing for it but to show the versatility of my talents by being par excellence the most stupid person in company all the rest of the way, only waking up now and then to listen to the discourse of a man, who inspired me for the first time with regret that I was not born a monkey. I shall never be able to get up any respect for human nature again, until I can go to Boston and hear Dr. Channing preach a sermon on the dignity of human reason.

Pierce was waiting to receive Jane at Grand-mama's. And I was met with open arms at our own door, Aunt Kent among the rest who hardly allowed me to sit down before she carried me off to call on Mary Ann, she took cold the day of the

party and has been rather more unwell ever since. She seems now to be getting over it, and walked up here this morning to invite one of us to go over to your house with her. Caty went, and Mary Anne feels all the better this afternoon for her walk. On Tuesday I went in to see Jane and found her in all the hurry of packing, but still uncertain whether the weather would permit them to commence their journey. They did, however, as you doubtless know, having been previously married up in very good style. No one was present except our family and old General Pierce. When Mr. Aiken came, Robert led Jane in, in her riding dress and bonnet. They had none of those useful appendages called groomsmen and bridesmaids, and did not wait to be congratulated after the ceremony, but Pierce immediately led her forward to that part of the room where the fathers, mothers and aunts had placed themselves. She behaved sweetly and kept up her courage to the last. I saw a few tears, but they looked as if they were brightened by the hope that "teaches e'en our tears to keep the tinge of rapture while they flow." They left in about half an hour and Mary, Robert, Catharine and I all set ourselves about doing up and directing wedding cake, which having finished, Robert and I went down to spend the rest of the forenoon with Mary Anne

Remember me affectionately to Dr. and Mrs. Dalton, and give my heart full of love to my dear uncle Robert and my dear Abba. I hope they will

write to me. And you too, my love, I entreat you to sit right down and tell me everything that has happened since I came from Lowell. I did not see as much of you as I wished for a week before I left. Remember me to Catharine Lawrence if she has not left Lowell. Love to dear Mary and her children.

Good bye my dear Cousin. I am as ever your
Aff. MARY JANE MEANS.

A good many years ago when I was first gathering information for this chronicle, I was talking one day with one of my father's sisters about the Amherst of her time when she said, almost casually, that there was one thing that had happened in those days the cause of which she had often wondered about but had never known. Aunt Appleton and Aunt Spalding had been close and intimate friends from their girlhood; and then came a time, when they were no longer young, when something occurred to cause a break in this old friendship which never healed. More than that she could not tell me, but a mystery of any kind is always attractive to the youthful mind, so I, too, began to wonder. Some time later I was visiting my Aunt Mary Jane Adams, the eldest sister of my father, and to her I mentioned the matter, telling her what I had heard and asking her if there was anything she could tell me about it. There was a rather long pause of consideration. I can see her

now as she sat in her little rocking-chair sewing, as was her wont, more rapidly than I ever saw any-one else sew, but dropping her work in her lap as she gave her full attention to my request. At last she spoke: "Yes, my dear, I can tell you the reason for that break and as there is now no one who could be hurt by it, I will." She told me the following story, which I must retell in my own way.

Mary Appleton was a very beautiful and charming girl, deeply beloved by all her friends, and especially dear to her Aunt and Uncle Lawrence. Her charm was such that she must have had many lovers, and to one of them she became engaged. But her Uncle Lawrence disapproving the engagement, it was broken. Sometime later, so the story runs, another suitor found favor not only with her, but with all her family. He was a clergyman of most agreeable personality and, as all supposed, unblemished character. In his early youth, however, he had loved and betrayed a young girl who, with her baby, died in childbirth. His deep remorse became repentance, and he determined to devote his life to the service of God and his fellowmen in the ministry. He was no longer in his youth when he met and loved Mary Appleton, and he felt it right to tell the tale of his sin to her Uncle Robert who, in consideration of his deep repentance and years of faithful life as a clergyman, decided not to repeat the confidence to sister or niece. Probably all might have gone well but for a Mrs.

S., who through some means knew the circumstances, and taking it upon herself one summer evening after supper, she hied her to the Appleton home to tell what she knew. She found Mary walking in the garden alone, and to her she unfolded her tale. Picture to yourself a beautiful and innocent girl, who had previously been made to give up the man she loved because of the strong disapproval of a much loved uncle whom she trusted, now when she was happy in the belief that her friends approved the man of her choice, confronted with such a story told by a village busy-body for whom she cared not at all. Exactly what were her thoughts we cannot guess; but many years later I knew her, and her gentle goodness and the whiteness of her soul were as apparent then as they must have been in her youth. She naturally told her mother what she had heard; and knowing the quality of Aunt Appleton, it is not difficult to imagine how her indignation flamed up, not at Mrs. S. who had brought the tale, but at the man who had presumed to love her daughter; and curiously, not even upon her brother Robert, who had known and kept silence did her wrath fall most heavily, but on her own familiar friend, Aunt Spalding who, it transpired, had also known and had not told. There were words between them, and the upshot was that this friendship was broken as well as the engagement.

That was the tale my aunt told me. But "there's a divinity which shapes our ends rough-hew them

how" our friends will; and although it may not sound very romantic to say that Mary Appleton later married a widower with two children, yet the man she married was John Aiken, and probably more than either of her other lovers he had the power to preserve her happiness. His goodness and wisdom were as towers of strength to her gentleness; and he so carefully guarded her that something of the bloom of her youth remained in her as long as he lived. When he died, in 1867, there came a change in her which grew greater as time went on. Her youngest daughter, who was most dear to her, married Professor F. H. Snow, who had studied theology in Andover but had afterward accepted a call to the University of Kansas as a professor of natural history. This change coming about one year after her husband's death, probably further troubled the serenity of her life. She did not lose her charm. Nothing could take that away—that, or her lovely submission to these changes in her life. But the joy of her youth was gone. Her voice was as sweet, but her laugh was far less frequent. After a while her eldest daughter, with her family, came to live with her and ministered to her mother most lovingly; also, at last, her step-daughter, the widow of a son of that Doctor Lord who had been summoned to witness the deathbed testimony of Mrs. Charles Atherton, came to spend the last days with her: so that she had those who deeply loved her around her as the end drew near.

My father moved his family to Andover when I was fifteen, and the Aikens became our neighbors and dear friends. Mrs. Aiken's eldest daughter was my intimate and much loved friend, and I was constantly in their house. I loved her mother with most tender affection. She had still much beauty, and her voice, and especially her laugh, was as music to my ears. No evil ever touched her. Sorrows, indeed, she had, as who has not who lives. At the time of Benny Pierce's tragic death, my Aunt Mary Jane in a letter to her husband speaks of Mary as an Angel of Consolation to her terribly bereaved sister; and my father uses the identical phrase when writing to his sister of the death of Mrs. Aiken's brother, Robert Appleton, that in the absence of her own sisters, she had "Mary Aiken who, as we all know, is the Angel of Consolation." Of John and Mary Aiken's children William, the eldest, married and had seven children; Jane, Mrs. Snow, had six children; Mary, the older daughter, married George Ripley of Andover, where she still lives, my beloved cousin and neighbor. Of her seven children, Alfred, the bank president, and George have not married; Sarah, Mrs. Cutler, Mary, Mrs. Shipman, and Philip all have children, and there is a George Ripley in the third generation.

Charles H. Atherton died at Amherst January 8, 1853, his daughter, Mary Ann, died a week later; Charles G., his son, died in November of the same year and with him, as far as descendants of Joshua

are concerned, died the name of Atherton. At that time it seemed as if the two families of Means and Atherton were steeped in affliction. Amos Lawrence, who had married the youngest daughter of Robert Means, and was everybody's friend, died in the night between 1852 and 1853, and was buried the fifth of January. The next day Franklin Pierce and his wife, who had been Jane Appleton, saw their only child, a beautiful boy, killed before their eyes when the train, which they had taken after a visit at Andover, ran off the track. Mr. Pierce was then President-elect of the United States and the tragedy of his boy's death roused the sympathy of the whole nation. Some of the family, who were Atherton, as well as Means, heard while at Benny Pierce's funeral at Andover of the death of their uncle Charles H. Atherton at Amherst, and went there without returning to Boston. My aunt, Mrs. Bigelow, with her husband and little daughter, had sailed for Europe the day after Uncle Lawrence's funeral, and Mrs. Robert Means wrote them of the sorrows that immediately followed their departure. The account is also given in letters from Aunt Mary Jane Adams to her husband and Aunt Ellis. In the complete collapse of Mrs. Pierce, Mrs. Means, when President Pierce entered upon his office, became for a time virtual lady of the White House.

BOSTON, Feb. 14, 1853.

My dear Eliza and Mr. Bigelow:

Like the messengers that came in quick succession to the righteous Man of Uz, so have all your letters from home been the bearers of evil tidings. Indeed as I look back to the opening year, the day I accompanied you to the parting of those dear friends—shaded as it was by the thought of our separation, seems bright, compared to all that followed. The next afternoon, Thursday, as I was reading near the window, I saw your dear Uncle L's carriage stop at the door—and as Susan got out she hesitated, did not ring, but had the air of a person meditating what she would say. I took the alarm at once and ran to the door which she had opened without ringing—"have you heard the sad news?" "Who? Where?" "Benny Pierce—the railroad"—was all she could say. I rode back with her to Tremont Street to talk with Mary, Tom and Rebecca, they only knew that there had been an accident one mile from Andover, the dear boy was killed and all were returned to Andover. Rebecca agreed to go with me in the morning train, but not being able to come in from Longwood I reached Andover an hour before her. There had been no sleep in the house of Mr. Aiken that night, poor Jane was at times frantic in her grief which found vent in screams and piteous moans. She could not receive comfort from anything and we were only useful to cheer Mary—in sitting by her, hold-

ing her hand and listening to groundless self-reproach—"Oh why did I not hold him in my arms and keep him safe with me!" was her heart piercing cry. Mr. P though suffering from bruises himself, was often by her side trying to soothe her passionate grief, and so the time was ground through and struggled through until Monday. How this was done I hardly know—for it was a time of passionate despair of God's mercy and loving kindness. Offerings of sympathy in every beautiful form came pouring in—flowers, letters or messages of comfort and the prayers of great men of all sects throughout our land. The friends of Gen. Pierce flocked to Andover and took lodging to be near him "until all was over," expressing an enthusiasm for his person that was really touching, among them Colonel Whipple and Colonel Steptoe of Newport were very interesting men. By the friends who came up to the funeral I heard of Uncle Atherton's death and that Mother had that day gone to Amherst with Mary and Mrs. McG. I left Andover at two and the next morning started with Mary Jane for Amherst, Mrs. C. Thayer being our escort. Charles who had been absent at Washington got into the cars at Nashua and seemed calm and collected as usual, and through all the sad scenes that followed I realized more than ever before how much tenderness is a cultivated feeling. Mary Ann seemed much excited and as you have often seen her, but with none of the usual signs of emotion and Ann wore her usual smiling aspect. After all was over

the house seemed to me like one from which all the strength had departed, and how dear Aunt Nancy could bear her charge, now the strong, active and governing intellect was no more—was a sad and grave question which our heavenly Father answered in his own way. After the friends had departed I went down to see them often and M. A. came to Uncle Spalding's. She seemed well, except this excitement expressing a great consciousness of thought and power. The oppression on her lungs began on Tuesday but she refused to send for the Dr. until Wednesday and on Thursday she was thought dangerously sick. I was with her one night and a part of every day but had little satisfaction except from the feeling that she did not suffer much. Sweet and uncomplaining she was to the last, the lungs became filled so gradually that she was able to speak until the very last. Charles and Ann were there and she seemed pleased but said nothing to them especially. Aunt Nancy was greatly afflicted by this last blow. Charles was thoughtful and did many just and generous things, he called here today, said Aunt N. was now very serene, much gratified with the invitation Mr. Noyes and Helen had sent her—to make their house her home and thought in the Spring she would go there (I hope for a visit first), which may result in a more permanent arrangement if all parties continue to wish it, but our dear Aunt now looks up to Charles as she did to Uncle and will not I think be content far away from him. Now dear

Eliza, I fear I have told you thus far much that you knew before, but you do not know how charming your letter seemed to me. I was with your dear Aunt L. for a few days when Rebecca sent them in last Monday. She read it aloud and rejoiced in your safety. I went to inquire of Mrs. H. for your Miss Parker. She said her story was most romantic, but she had diamonds, point lace, and velvet to confirm the story of her former grandeur. She was sensible and cultivated, but very odd at times, heard she had just gone to Dublin to receive a legacy of 40,000 pounds. Mrs. Hale was, I hear, more delighted with her than Mrs. Hopkinson. I hope you will see her if you go to Dublin as her peculiarities are of a kind that need give you no trouble. Mary, Jane and Frederick left last Friday taking Alma to visit Helen. She was well and very spirited during the whole six weeks and put in our hearts a new fund of admiration. Rebecca came in yesterday to see the dentist and poor Jane Pierce who is now at Mrs. Mason's, upstairs. She is quite disconsolate still and some of our friends are quite out of patience, and I sometimes think that in their sympathy with Pierce and his heavy burdens, they are in danger of forgetting what a crushing blow has fallen on the Mother's heart. My prospects in going on with her are sadly reversed. If I can prove a comforter among mourners it is all I now ask for or expect. We shall start next Thursday I suppose and stop at Phil. at the Gerard house until

after the fourth. Pierce has rallied somewhat—indeed such is his position that he is like a man in a battle and must rush on though the dearest fall at his side. I had a most interesting call from him last week and cannot but hope that he enters his high office purified by suffering. Soon after I reach Washington I shall write to Mr. Bigelow though I hope to hear from him before then. If this finds you in London remember me affectionately to Miss A. who wrote me she was delighted to see you and Mr. Bigelow again. I am glad she likes Mr. Ingersol. I wonder if he remembers a journey we once took to Bangor when he delivered the Phi Beta at Bowdoin. Mother and Mary send you all a heap of love. Fanny is sick or she says she would write a note to dear Helen. I hope that doll Mary Dunn dressed proved a beauty. Tell me about Mrs. Graham. Have you found our old lodgings at Vincents? Does Mr. B. enjoy himself and others—as you wish? The engagement of the Rev. Mr. Montfort, English Unitarian, to Miss Elizabeth Crowninshield, 15 years his senior makes a great noise; Miss Fanny Lyman to Dr. Moreland is thought more suitable. Robert Means called here yesterday with C. G. A. and we think he will have an office. I hope you and Mr. Bigelow will not stay long away—our circle is so diminished in numbers that I feel drawn more nearly and tenderly to those who are left. I look with a sigh at the door of the Tremont House through which I entered to you. May God bless you and keep you

252 AMHERST AND OUR FAMILY TREE

my dear friends and sanctify to you and to me the dealings of his providence.

Your Affectionate Aunt, Cousin and Friend,

A. A. MEANS.

P. S. I took the liberty to send and request Mr. Bigelow to send me a carpet bag of Clinton manufacture for my southern trip and the result does infinite credit to the "Bigelow taste as well as intellect"—It is elegant in form and refined in colors.

Aunt Mary Jane to Uncle Frederic and Aunt Ellis.

BOSTON, Friday, Jan. 7, 1853

Tremont Street.

Alas dear husband & sister that I must again write sad news. But you have doubtless seen it in the papers before this letter reaches you. Poor little Benny Pierce was killed on the railroad about 2 miles from Andover yesterday between 12 & one o'clock. They were on their way to Concord & had just taken the cars a few minutes before at the Andover Depot. His father and mother were with him. Mr. Packard was in the same car. The cause of the accident is not certainly known. At first it was said the axle was broken, but the last report is that one of the back wheels gave way, the car was wrenched round so that the back end was foreward and then it rolled over more than once they think, finally settling with the top downwards at the foot of the embankment which was 15 feet

deep and covered with stones. Mr. Pierce's last voluntary act before it rolled over was to seize Jane in one arm and reach the other towards Benny. But he did not grasp him and when it was all over Mr. Pierce found Benny lying by his side & saw that something, a seat perhaps, that had grazed his head and left many splinters in his hair had taken off the back of Benny's head & killed him instantly. Jane he kept in his arm, I believe she saw that dreadful sight for one moment, but Mr. Pierce threw a shawl over the precious little form and drew her away. Mr. Pierce is bruised on his back but not they think seriously, he cannot walk about in a straight position however.

Jane has shed few tears, she lies on the bed her eyes closed, now and then uttering a short ejaculation sometimes a prayer, sometimes a question "why was my boy killed? Oh tell them not to go on railroads!" The beautiful face was uninjured. They were carried to Andover as soon as a carriage could be got, two surgeons went up from Boston immediately. Dr. Dalton went over from Lowell & stayed all night I believe. Concord people came in the next train & the house was full. Rebecca and Abby Means went up this morning. William Aiken has been down and it is his account I give you. He has just gone back with Mrs. McMillan whom dear Aunt L. sends. We heard it yesterday afternoon, Rebecca was in, it was carefully kept from Aunt L. till after breakfast this morning. She had a good night, but was greatly overwhelmed

when I told her of it. William thought the funeral services must be at Andover as neither Jane nor Mr. P. would be able to leave, but nothing was settled when he left home this morning. Freddy came in and stayed with me all the evening his heart seemed full of thought of his father and his Aunt Ellis. He was very silent & affectionate. It was not difficult to conceal it from Aunt for she felt more exhausted yesterday than any day & wished to be left alone a great deal. As there were many callers I was obliged to be down stairs. Dear friends is not this a sad world. Nothing has happened for a long time that has so shaken my nerves. Write to me you are well—

M. J. ADAMS.

Monday Morning, Jan. 10, 1853

Tremont Street.

I hope I shall hear from you to-day my dear husband and sister in all this sorrow and wretchedness by which we are surrounded I cannot help at times feeling great anxiety about home, though at others you are driven out of my mind by the sad scenes about me. This morning Rebecca and the Masons have gone to Andover to attend poor little Benny's funeral. I did not go because I saw Aunt L. preferred I should stay with her and because I thought I could perhaps do more good when these exciting scenes were over, when Mr. Pierce must

return to his duties and Jane will be left alone with her wretchedness. We know not what she will do but we all hope she will not allow herself to be separated from Mr. P. nothing of course will now be expected of her and wherever she is, she will be secluded from the world. Rebecca returned on Friday Evening and stayed that night with me, in the morning she did some shopping for Mary. Went to Warrens to see if the elegant velvet cloak could be exchanged for the deepest mourning and in the afternoon went out to Longwood. She has been in this morning before taking the cars. Mary & Mary Anne went early to take up the beautiful flowers to strew over the sad wreck; the lovely face was more injured than I supposed, the fatal wounds were not on it, but the eyes were discoloured and the forehead bruised. Jane went down into the library on Friday to see him. Rebecca says she gave vent to her agony in words on Friday, constantly talking about him, mourning that she had allowed herself to be separated from him, saying "Oh I was so glad to go back to Concord that I might have him all to myself and he was glad too though he had been so happy here." She had not wept but kept constantly wailing "Oh my boy, my beautiful boy!" Rebecca says it was enough to break one's heart when Mr. Pierce would come into her room nearly bent double by his bruises & muscular strains and throw himself on the bed by her side and mingle his woe with hers. There is but one opinion about him that he is one of the

noblest and most tender hearted of human beings. Jane says in her anguish, "Oh, was it to humble us, oh, we were not proud—never did his father seem so humble as of late." The friends around could only listen, what could be said! Even religious consolations were unable to hide from her eyes that horrible spectacle. But God did it and he is wise and good, and strength and consolation will come sometime with that thought. Dear husband and Ellis I had another reason for not going to Andover today. Uncle Atherton died on Saturday afternoon and I shall go to his funeral on Wed. I think, though we do not certainly know the day. The news came in a telegraphic dispatch. We knew he was ill. Mr. Davis wrote on Thursday that he was sick, & again on Friday that it was pronounced lung fever. We did not expect to hear the termination so soon though we knew it was not probable he could recover. Aunt Kent and Miss M. A. Thayer have gone up today. Abby will go from Andover this P. M. I shall go up the day of the funeral. How are our friends falling round us. I do hope Helen has gone to Orange that you may be together my two dear sisters. I wrote to Eliza this morning to send by the steamer of Wed. from N. York, I hope you will write by the next my dear husband & sister. Send this letter to Helen if she is not with you for I cannot write another today. Alfred Aiken is here & he and Fred have a pleasant time together. Give a great deal of love to Bch. and also to Miss Warren and the young ladies.

Write me all about them. How do you get along dear sister? Remember me affectionately to the three girls & to John. Your letter seemed so sad, my dear husband that I long most earnestly to hear from you again. What have you heard from Lempster?

Your M. J. A.

Boston, Monday, Jan. 17, 1853.

Tremont Street.

I wrote to you at Manchester my dear husband & sister, it was a snowy morning (last Thursday) and seems to have been much such a storm as with you, it began on Wed. evening soon after we arrived at Manchester and continued all day on Thursday & more moderately on Friday. It was a much greater fall of snow in Boston than in Manchester, and above Concord I understand there was little or none. Seeing it was not likely to clear off I got Wm. to send a cab for me in the afternoon and Martha & I went to see Uncle & Aunt French. They are living in quite a pretty new house, and seem as comfortable as their infirmities will allow them to be, indeed Aunt is very cheerful. I had an excellent visit at Williams, all the children at home but Annie. We left on Friday at 11 and came to Andover. Freddy did not stop there, but went directly on to Boston. I went up to the

Aikens' and found Rebecca preparing to leave in the 2 o'clock train.

Jane is well, but most wretched, nor can she fix her mind long on any thing but her affliction. She cannot *harmonize* God's dealings with them and is not content to leave that to him. The soul is filled with grief and compassion in seeing her, but I hope it may yet come to her in a different and less hopeless aspect. If she were any body but herself, I should think it certainly would, but you cannot but tremble for one who is always so depressed and now has such bitter cause. I sat by her side all that afternoon & evening. She was never tired of talking about him, and it is actually the only relief she knows, for the moment she ceases to recall incidents in the past. She is overwhelmed with thoughts of the present. Mary is like an angel ministering to her, to Mr. Pierce and to her own large family, trusting and blessing God through all, but Jane looks on Mary's blooming children and thinks that Mary cannot know her unutterable woe, and this seems natural but I fear it will last so long as to prevent her being a comfort to her husband or rather that it may make her actually a source of sorrow & anxiety when he needs strength and consolation. He is very grave, I saw no smile on his face,—but a fixed expression of sorrow & despondency. He left Andover this morning for the first time, except when he accompanied the remains to Concord. He was in town an hour this forenoon and called to see Aunt L.

Nothing it appears to me could add to the interest and esteem he excites in everybody's mind, and if he does not make a good President I shall be grievously disappointed. The plan as far as any is formed is to decline what had previously been offered and accepted, the hospitalities of the cities, to go on in the most private manner leaving Jane at Philadelphia till the inauguration is over. Abby will still accompany her though it will be to share her seclusion. She has never intended to go to W. before the inauguration, but Mr. Pierce told me that Benny was to have gone with him that he might remember it in future years. I left them at half past 5 Saturday evening. Mary Mason had been with Aunt L. in my absence.

I found all well, Fred safe & happy at Aunt Mason's. I went to St. Paul's in the morning, to Park Street in the afternoon, after church I went over to see Aunt Kent. We feared she would be ill after her Amherst journey, but she seems better. This morning Rebecca was in and I was out shopping with her for Jane Pierce. Aunt sent her home in one of dear Uncle's sleighs since dinner. All is unchanged here save the one great change. Aunt now sits in her own chamber & receives no company down stairs, of course she only sees friends & connexions though she has had many calls. Her heart is securely placed on God and I know she will yet be happy though she is so lonely & afflicted.

I wish my dear husband that you would write

to Jane if you feel that you can say any thing that will open to her a less desponding view of her calamity. Considered in an earthly sense, nothing can do that, but I thought you might suggest to her some better thoughts than these which now agonize her heart, and you dear sister ought to write to her, both of you. Expressions of love & sympathy from those she loves are among the few things that comfort her, especially from those who had seen & loved her beautiful boy. If Helen were well I should suggest to her to ask Jane & Aunt Abby to remain with her if they have to stop in New York, but it is very trying to see her & I am not at all sure Helen could bear it. Do write me how she is, in none of the letters she has written has there been any thing about her health. Freddy has been out coasting today on the Common and dined at Charles Mason's by invitation. I have not been in the house with him a whole day since we left home except at Manchester, but he is employed & I think is a good boy. He was quite mortified at sending his father such a little note but I was in a great hurry & had not time to wait for him to write more. I rec'd one letter from you my dear husband at Andover, another came Saturday & still another today. I thank you with all my heart for writing so often.

Your loving,

M. J. A.

CHAPTER IX

THE AUNTS

Many of the third generation of both families I knew, and of some of these I have already written—of Charles G. Atherton and Edward Spalding, of Mary Appleton, of Abba Spalding, and of those visiting cousins who were so dear to them. And although in connection with Amherst I knew intimately only Cousin Abba, my father and uncles and especially my aunts used to tell me many stories about their early life there. The marriage of Catharine Atherton and David McGregor Means had first united the two families of Atherton and Means, and their three sons, my father and two uncles, I will leave for a later chapter. What I especially want to do now is to celebrate the character and quality of my six aunts, who were as interesting and remarkable as my grandmother and great aunts, the six daughters of Joshua Atherton; and with every one of them, excepting Aunt Catharine Cleaveland who died when I was three years old, I have had intimate association.

In these later days there seems to have grown up a habit in fiction, and to some extent elsewhere, of alluding to aunts, and especially maiden aunts, as if they might be superfluous and even undesirable. No doubt there are odds in aunts as in other relations of life; but as I have been particularly

fortunate in my aunts, I am moved to express my love, my admiration, and my deep indebtedness to them, and it has been my ambition, as an aunt in my turn, to follow however far behind in their footsteps. For I consider their influence and their memory as among the most precious inheritances which have come my way. I owe more to that particular relation than I can ever repay. It was my good fortune to grow up in intimate relation with my father's sisters; and as a child I spent half my time with my dear mother's only sister whose name I bear, and lived in the light of her most tender love and wise understanding of my childish mind. Certainly I was well endowed with aunts. There is not one of them who did not teach me lessons of lifelong value; and it now falls to my lot to sing the praise of aunts in general and in particular.

The daughters of David and Catharine Means made their home in Amherst for about two years after their mother's death. Mary Jane, the eldest daughter, who was born in 1811, assumed such loving care of her younger sisters that wherever she was there was the home and the heart of the family to which they all turned until they married and had homes of their own. In 1839 Aunt Mary Jane was married to the Reverend Frederic A. Adams, then minister of the Congregational Church at Amherst, and there in 1840 her eldest child and only son, Frederic, was born—the last descendant of Robert Means to be born in Amherst. Frederic

became Judge of the Circuit Court of New Jersey, and his descendants live in New Jersey or New York, save Constance, who married Cecil De Mille, of moving-picture fame. But Aunt Mary Jane lost three little girls in their childhood. Mr. Adams soon found his position as pastor of the Amherst Church uncongenial to him, and accepted an invitation to become Principal of Dummer Academy in Byfield, Massachusetts. Shortly after his son's birth in October, he left Amherst for his new work. On the last day of 1840 his wife and her sisters followed him, and thereafter no Means lived in the old home, although there was always a close connection kept up with the friends and relatives in Amherst. Later, as I have said, Mrs. Robert Means, Junior, bought the old Means mansion and came there to live with her mother, Aunt Kent, and so the house passed from the Means to the Atherton side of the family.

Mary Jane Adams was most truly the head of her family, and at Orange in 1882, when she was nearing the end of her life, and her sisters Ellis and Helen were watching by her bedside, they received a letter from their dear cousin, Mary Kent McGregor, who was so often with them in their youth. "Memory carries me back to the early days in Amherst," runs the letter, "when you were little girls making a part of as happy a household as one could ever see, the father, mother and children bound together in love. Then Mary Jane, as time went on, so brilliant and admired by all who saw

her, and at home the loving daughter and sister aiding her mother and delighting her father and all the friends who came to that hospitable home. When the father and mother were called away, what love was concentrated on the children left to her care, dear loving sister that she was. I think of her in all the relations of life as pre-eminent, and she has had the reward of being amongst the best beloved. I feel sad as I think of Mr. Adams in his anxieties and for you all, but you have all the higher consolation and such memories of concord and love as are not unavailing to soothe. Eliza is so kind as to send us her reports from Orange, knowing our sympathy and interest. As I remember dear Abba's intervals of relief, I cannot but hope Mary Jane will also have those days, when Abba used to say 'I feel like a strong well-built house where there is only one break.'" Letters of their girlhood, at the end of this chapter, give a picture of their happy early days in Amherst, and the following letter from Aunt Mary Jane to Cousin Abba shows us the beautiful spirit in which she met her later sorrows as a mother.

ORANGE, N. J., Feb. 14, 1855.

I am keeping study hour tonight, my dear cousin, and as I rang the bell I resolved I would devote the hour to you. Ellis has written this afternoon to Dora from whom she has recently received two

kind letters, but I know you will be glad to hear directly from us. . . .

The last year, dear Abby, seems a year of hopes and joys reawakened only to be destroyed and sometimes in the routine of care which moves on as ever, I think it must be a dream that I have been so happy. We had learned to do without this happiness and now we must learn again.

I was much interested in what you wrote about Harriet Nesmith, all those who have suffered from repeated losses seem very dear to us. I wish you had seen our sweet baby. She was very fair and large, but with a face of great baby sweetness. She had not the decided style of face which Emmy had even at her age, but it was like Emmy's in form, and she had the same large almost massive head; in complexion she was like Nanny. Her temper, as far as we could judge, promised to be very gentle and quiet. I know not how it was, dear Abby, but the babyhood of none of my children seemed so lovely as hers.

We received her as a precious and unexpected treasure and even in our busiest times the care of her seemed a solace and pleasure. Ellis and I arranged all our work with reference to the charge. Our neighbour and friend Mrs. Baldwin used often to say that she never had seen a child who was taken so much care of, this was only true, I suppose as it regarded her nurses, for we seldom trusted her with anyone else. When Ellis went away she was moved into my chamber. How little

I thought it was to die! There where Emmy and Nanny had breathed their last, did our sweet Grace also yield up her breath. She had had a cold for several days, but it had not made her sick. I had not neglected it, but I knew it was not cured, for in spite of the utmost care she continued to be oppressed every night. At length on her birthday, the 15th of January, after being very bright all day and going to bed in a sweet playful mood, she awoke when I went to bed in a high fever and from that time she was very sick. She had a cough but it was not severe or painful and the Dr. does not think the inflammation was extensive or acute, but she had a remittant fever and on the 25th she sank under it. It was on Thursday, Ellis came home on Tuesday with Freddy. Ellis could not be persuaded that she would not be better, but I saw no reason to hope. Poor E. pays the penalty of loving much, again she has lost her lovely little bed fellow, the object of her constant love and care. Freddy's grief was very great, but he is now cheerful and interested in his usual occupations. To her father she is a loss indeed, the first sound of his step or of his voice excited her as nothing else did, and when the outstretched arms had attained their object and she was raised to his shoulder she looked down upon us with a little shout of triumph which we shall listen long to hear again. He is able to see God's hand in all His dealings with us, and to repose on His love even in his sorrow. I am not so happy as he is in this respect and

while I am sure it is ordered by His wise and merciful hand, I have a feeling of its being a chastisement, a punishment if I may so express it.

If it is so, I question not its justice or its mercy, I only pray that I may profit by it. It is very difficult, my dear Abby, to know how far one should make a particular individual application of these afflictions. To a certain point we are safe, that they are sent for our profit and for our growth in grace, but under the pressure of a heavy sorrow one becomes too inquisitive into the designs of God. At least I have feared there is danger of being so and I remember I have often thought so of others. You do not know these sorrows, dear A., may you be spared them. I have thought a great deal of your mother and my own imperfect appreciation of her grief when she saw two of her children taken from her at once. Give my love to her, dear Abby, and to my dear Uncle. It would be a solace if I could see them but it seems as though I am less likely than ever to see my distant friends for our vacations are arranged in a new way and the family is too large for me to leave in term time. We number 27 in family, servants included. I had, almost immediately after our loss, a very kind note from Anne Atherton.

Will not you and Mr. Davis come on here at the anniversary season in May, my dear Abby, I wish you would with all my heart and bring little Rebecca with you.

Think of it, my dear cousin, and give me the

pleasure of seeing you and your husband to whom I wish to be most affectionately remembered.

Your M. J. ADAMS

When Aunt Mary Jane moved to Byfield, Aunt Eliza was teaching school in Lowell, and Rebecca and Helen, "the little girls" they were still called, were sent to Boston for a visit. Aunt Rebecca went to the Masons, in care of her uncle Robert Means, Junior, and from there wrote a letter describing her Christmas to Aunt Ellis. But the family home for all the sisters shifted at that time from Amherst to Byfield, for where Aunt Mary Jane was there was the head of the family.

My dear Sister:

I have just finished a note to James, and now I am going to begin one to you. It is Saturday evening and Uncle, Aunt and Elisa have just gone home. We have had a very pleasant Christmas. Elisa was in good spirits. She says she shall go to Byfield in her next vacation (which will begin sometime next week) unless you stop at Lowell as you go along. Helen and I have had lots of presents.

Aunt Abba gave us each a beautiful portfolio; Aunt Mason gave us each a very pretty pink mantle

and she also gave me a dark and very pretty mouselin-de-laine, which she and Uncle paid for the making of and which I wore on Christmas with my pink mantle. Jane gave me a very handsome apron. Aunt Lawrence gave Helen a handkerchief and me a bag. Uncle Lawrence gave me a cake of sweet smelling and transparent soap. George Mason gave Helen Grey's poems and me "A Token of Friendship." Uncle Mason gave me a half of a dollar in the morning when I wished him a merry Christmas. Do you not think I said truly, when I said lots?

Now I must tell you how I spent Christmas. In the morning Helen and I went to church and Elisa went down to the store to spend the morning with Caty, for Anne Allen kept shop in the morning. After meeting we had dinner and a grand dinner it was too. Then Helen and I went down to Anne's to play with Anna and Abby and May Allen. After tea was finished we came home again and all the relations spent the evening at Uncle Mason's, and we had a grand frolic.

Aunt Mason sends her love and says she is much obliged for your letter and says I must tell you that I am a very good girl. Give my love to Mr. Massy. Helen has not had any toothache. I suppose that my next letter will be directed to Byfield. Good-bye I am dear Ellis your affectionate sister and dear Mary Jane your affectionate daughter.

R. W. MEANS.

Uncle Frederic, in due time, left Dummer Academy to take charge of a boarding school for young ladies in Orange, New Jersey, where he continued for ten years or more when he became Principal of an Academy in Newark. Thither in the early autumn of 1857 I was sent to school, and there I remained until the spring of 1859. I was entirely happy there and absorbed as much knowledge as I suppose I was capable of at the time, but what I learned at school seems to me now a negligible quantity compared to what I learned of life and character from my aunt.

Anyone who has had a painfully shy child to deal with may perhaps understand what a sense of doom had filled my being at the thought of being sent out alone in the world to seek my educational fortune; yet there was a spice of adventure about the idea which appealed to another side of my mind. A suitable opportunity was sought to send me on my way, and I was entrusted to the care of Mr. Cleaveland, my Aunt Catharine's husband, who was returning to New York, where they lived. I had been paying my Aunt Ann Tracy a farewell visit in Medford, and she brought me into Boston to deliver me into the hands of Mr. Cleaveland. No man could be more kind and courteous than he, but he had not a personality calculated to diminish the shyness of a girl who was leaving home for the first time to dwell among strangers. When we got on board the Fall River boat Mr. Cleaveland met some friends, a doctor and his wife

from Brooklyn, and they had a little daughter with them about my age. Her name was Kitty, and we fraternized at once, no doubt after the manner of our kind swearing eternal friendship. This one lasted until we parted on the dock next morning, and I have never seen Kitty since. Mr. Cleveland took a carriage and conveyed me to East Twenty-seventh Street where I was to be left until called for with Aunt Helen Noyes. No one could long remain a victim to shyness with Aunt Helen, for she was the most sociable and delightful of women. We speedily became friends, and I was with her about a week before Aunt Mary Jane came to take me to Newark.

I admired and looked up to Aunt Mary Jane from the first, but somehow my shyness intensified rather than evaporated, and perhaps I was a little afraid of her as well as of Uncle Frederic. At any rate I remember that I suffered for a long time from homesickness. Aunt Ellis was then a member of the household, and I had to room with her. She was kind and affectionate, but she had a way of showing an interest in the experiences of my soul which I greatly disliked. This matter of being assailed on the subject of personal religion is the only fault I ever had to find with any aunt; and Aunt Ellis, dear soul, did have the habit of inquiring for my soul's health. As I had never been conscious of having a soul worth mentioning, I did not see any occasion for making a fuss about it. It seemed quite uncalled for to ask me if I

was a Christian. Of course I was, or believed myself to be. My religious education had been, I fear, somewhat mixed. More than half my time as a child had been spent with my Aunt Ann Tracy and her husband, who were Episcopalians; and although I have never in my life met more earnest and devout Christians than they, still they did not take my bringing up too seriously. I was taught the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments with exemplary thoroughness, also most of the Collects in the Prayer Book and the Catechism of the Episcopal Church; and having been thus instructed, it was taken for granted that I was "a happy Christian child" so long as I tried to practise what I had learned. Aunt Ann often talked as if we were equals in our obligations to live Christian lives; but she certainly never spoke to me of the necessity of "conversion." That was an entirely new idea to me. My mother had been brought up as a Unitarian, and that was hardly a Unitarian doctrine. My father was certainly a Christian; but although he used to gather us children about him on Sunday nights and read the Bible with us and teach us the Ten Commandments, he never examined us as to our Christian faith. No wonder that I failed in those early days to appreciate Aunt Ellis, and for no earthly reason except that she insisted on doing what she most certainly believed to be her duty by me in seeking my "conversion." Yet she was full of kindness and

affection, and as the years went on I became warmly attached to her.

But as a result of this attention to my soul, I had the sense to see that there *was* something I lacked, though I did not know what it could be. About that time there came all over the land a great religious revival that was not due to the work of any one man or group of men. I have never seen anything like it; it was like a great outpouring of the Spirit of God. It was in the air, and everyone seemed to be thinking and talking of religion. Personal religion became the most interesting subject in the world, and I began to see dimly what Aunt Ellis had been trying to drive into my unresponsive mind. The great need that filled my mind in this atmosphere was that I must consciously give my soul to God. I was deeply moved and prayed fervently not only for myself but especially for my older brother, Will, then a student at Phillips, Andover; and perhaps nothing moved me more than that my prayers for him were apparently answered, for I received a letter from him before long telling me that he had given his heart to God, and urging upon me the same step. Still I do not think I was "converted," and I still disliked having anyone speak to me personally on the subject, but I liked to go to church and hear what the minister had to say.

The Newark minister was a neighbor and dear friend of my uncle and aunt, and a constant visitor at the house. He was the son of a missionary, born

in Ceylon, a genial man, and I remember his saying about me: "When there's anything amusing going, her laugh is the first that sounds." But usually the talk was serious enough, for he loved to come in and discuss with my elders the most intricate questions of theology, philosophy and literature, and of course I listened with all my might.

Aunt Mary Jane was a wise woman and never seemed to concern herself about my soul; but sometime ago I found a letter she had written to my father and mother about me; and in spite of all the years that lay between I was a little shocked to find that at that time she had discovered no clue to my character and did not know what in the world to make of me. I was so shy that I didn't have much to say, and I think my aunt didn't know whether there *was* much to say; still, I am quite sure that my own family never at any period looked at me in the light of a problem. Nor did Aunt Mary Jane long regard me in that way, for we became dear friends and companions before I left the school. As time went on I often paid her long visits, and our knowledge of each other grew. I have always thought of her as a great woman, perhaps the greatest I have ever known. No wonder all her brothers and sisters looked up to her as their head and chief. She had great qualities of mind and heart; she was rather tall, fine looking and handsome, with a very noble countenance. She was a great reader, and assimilated all she read. She had an independent mind, with a gift of seeing

all around a subject which is very rare, and she looked well to the ways of her household. She got up early and put the living-rooms in order for the day, and how she got time to absorb all the news in the morning paper before breakfast I do not know. I often heard the pupils in the school remark the same thing. She never liked to have even little things, such as finding the place in a hymn-book, done for her that she could do for herself. She treated me as an equal even when I was a green school girl, and to my delight never spoiled a story for relation's sake. She may have had some special fondness for me because I was just the age of her little Emily who had died; and she gave me Emily's hymn-book, in which I especially remember one hymn that went:

"I thank the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these later days
A happy Christian child."

After my time, my three younger brothers, in their turn, were sent to the New Jersey school, and I think Aunt Mary Jane became attached to us all; but my brother Charles was the one to win the deepest affection of both her and her husband. Once when I was on a visit while Charlie was there, the market man failed to send the dinner; and when I heard Charlie was to have given the order, I suggested, with a sister's scepticism,

that possibly Charles forgot. "Charlie *never* forgets," was Aunt Mary Jane's indignant response. Well, Charlie hadn't forgotten; the boy had the most astounding habit of never being caught out.

Many years after my school days were over I was once visiting in Orange, with one of my cousins, and a party was given by Aunt Mary Jane in our honor. Paying no attention to social lines, she invited all her friends, who were in every grade of society. In the course of the evening a young lady of the more fashionable and exclusive set said to me: "There is no woman in Orange except Mrs. Adams who could give a party like this." Then perhaps because of my questioning look, she went on: "I don't say that some women might not attempt it, but it would not work as it does here. People would not mix. But such is the regard and honor in which we hold Mrs. Adams that in her house all her friends become the friends of one another." I knew well Aunt Mary Jane's all-embracing friendliness. I suppose if she drew any social line at all, she drew it at personal good-breeding. She was always a good friend. I can recall her advice to me once: "Wherever you live, my dear, establish such relations with your near neighbors that if they are in any trouble, it will be perfectly natural for you to go to them to express your sympathy or to help them in any way you can."

My mother always said that Aunt Catharine was one of the best loved and most lovable of the

sisters. After her marriage to Mr. Cleaveland she lived in New York, but she died in Byfield and was buried at Amherst. I remember being told of her death, and my father and mother going away to the funeral. The thing that fixed it in my baby mind—I was only a little over three years old—was a curious sense of responsibility I felt the night they were away lest the reigning baby of the time—my brother Robert, I think—should get uncovered, and no one be there to cover him up. So I arose in what I must have thought the middle of the night and made my way to my mother's room. The two maids were sitting there, and very kindly allowed me to see that all was well before hustling me back to bed.

I have always had the impression that the last years of Aunt Catharine's life were not happy ones. The parents of Mr. Cleaveland's first wife were not pleased with this second marriage, and as they all lived in the same house, their influence over their grandchildren—Aunt Catharine's step-children—did not tend to smooth matters. I think Aunt Helen Noyes must have acted as a kind of harmonizer in the Cleaveland family, for they all visited her, and it was in her house that I used to see them when I visited her in the vacations of my Newark schooldays. I well remember Miss Abby Cleaveland, the only daughter of that first marriage, a very attractive young woman both as to looks and as to manners, who was a dear friend of Aunt Helen. And after Aunt Catharine's death, her own little

daughter was brought up by Aunt Helen, who ever regarded her as a child of her heart. She was a fascinating little witch of a girl, to whom as she grew up I became greatly attached. She was not a meek and gentle child, and sometimes we had violent differences of opinion, but no difference was ever allowed to interfere with our real love for each other. When she was a little girl, she was called Kitty; but as she grew up and put away childish things, she announced that her friends and relations, if they wished to retain her affection, must drop the "Kitty," a name she would no longer answer to, and say Kate. Aunt Helen, only, was allowed to use the old name—Aunt Helen, who had been as a mother to her ever since her mother died; and indeed no mother could have loved and cherished the child more tenderly. Kate repaid her love with a daughter's affection, and Aunt Helen died at her home in Lexington. Kate had married Doctor Robert Means Lawrence, a step-grandson of Aunt Lawrence and thus, again, the Means and Lawrence families were united. Their children are Isabel de Gersdorf and Madeleine Lawrence.

Aunt Ellis was the only unmarried sister, and when it seemed best that a niece should live with Aunt Lawrence in Boston, Aunt Ellis, who was her namesake and had no family ties, was obviously the one to go; and there she remained, with occasional visits to New York and New Jersey, until Aunt Lawrence's death in 1866. But the real

home of her heart was with Aunt Mary Jane and Uncle Frederic, and their children were as dear to her as if they had been her own. After their death, she spent much time with her sister Eliza, and later with her nieces, Mrs. Merriman and my sister and myself. But her heart was with my cousin Judge Adams's family in Summit and Orange; and in Orange, at the home of that dearly loved nephew, she died.

Aunt Ellis was a delightful member of my family in her long winter visits when, alas, there were no more sisters for her to visit, and the resentment of those early days at Newark when I thought she had inquired too closely into the state of my soul was of course long since wiped out. She was a great lover of poetry, and we liked to hear her repeat the many poems she had learned. Those whom we love are often as much endeared to us for their idiosyncrasies as for their steadfast virtues; and Aunt Ellis was a source of amusement to some of her affectionate nieces and nephews because of her somewhat pugnacious manner of refusing a casual courtesy. She seemed to resent it as an indication that the person supposed her in need of help. I remember one day, when she was about my present age, taking a car with her on Boylston Street. The car was full, and a charming young lady at once offered her a seat. "No, I thank you. I am perfectly well able to stand," was the response in a tone that was anything but thankful and sounded as if she would

like to have said "Drat your impudence! I'm as well able to stand as you are!" I pushed her into the seat, and later when I remonstrated with her for her unnecessary indignation she declared she was exactly as well able to stand as the young woman, and she very much disliked being treated as if she could not do what other people did.

My aunts were all deeply attached to one another, but temperamentally they were not much alike, and it was interesting to watch the different qualities play upon one another. Once when Aunt Ellis was visiting in Boston, it was planned that she and Aunt Helen should make an excursion to Nashua to spend the afternoon with Cousin Dora Spalding, who had been a schoolmate and intimate friend of Aunt Ellis and was at that time an invalid. The aunts were duly instructed to change cars at Nashua Junction, and they set forth in good order. But, alas and alas, when they reached the Junction they were so interested in their conversation that they did not heed the conductor's warning to "Change here for Nashua city." They went on with their conversation, and in a few moments the train went on for the north. When they came back to the present, they found there was no way of getting to Nashua that day, and they had lost their chance of visiting Cousin Dora. So they spent the afternoon in the station at Manchester, which was the next stopping place, waiting for the return train to Boston and somewhat depressed at the prospect of having to meet Aunt Eliza. I

don't know what Aunt Eliza said to them; but later, when I made some laughing comment on the misadventure, she said seriously to me: "No, Annie, I don't want you to laugh. It is no laughing matter when your Aunt Helen is so heedless. Your Aunt Ellis was a visitor and should not have been expected to take notice. But they disappointed your Cousin Dora, and were themselves disappointed, besides the waste of time and money, and spending their whole afternoon in a smelly stuffy railway station." A little later the two aunts were invited to lunch with the Lawrences at Lexington. I, also, was asked, and as we were going to the station I heard one of them say: "I suppose dear Eliza feels quite easy about us to-day as Annie is with us."

Aunt Eliza was indeed a woman who, if she had not been so truly kind and understanding, might have been somewhat of a terror to wrong-doers. She was a counsel of perfection. She had all those virtues that dear Aunt Helen rather conspicuously lacked. There were no loose ends about her, and she found it hard to excuse any carelessness. She required absolute punctuality in the young. We must not be late to a meal, or keep the carriage waiting a minute—in fact we must be waiting for the carriage—when we were going to drive with her. When I was a young girl I think I held her too much in awe to come to any true understanding of her. But no one could be more "kindly affectioned" than she if you went to her with any real

trouble or difficulty. Aunt Eliza had married Mr. E. B. Bigelow, the inventor and manufacturer, and their only child was Helen, Mrs. Merriman, the mother of Roger B. Merriman of Cambridge. Aunt Eliza and my father had many traits in common, and among them a deep love for Aunt Helen, which I am sure made them determine that so far as it could be done Aunt Helen should be shielded and cared for.

The following little verse written to my father by Aunt Helen in 1889 will give an idea of their charming intimacy:

From Helen to William.

It came to me the other day
I'd write my love a letter,
And though my hand is weak,
I'm sure 'tis all the better—
For why should he be troubled
With bad writing in the matter
When the manin' is so plain,
That I love him faithfully,
And he knows it, oh he knows it
Without one word from me.

Aunt Helen indeed had about her an irresistible charm; just the sight of her brightened the atmosphere of the place where she might be. She never hesitated to tell a story against herself, and to tell it so delightfully that I am afraid we younger ones only loved her the better for her sins of omis-

sion. I don't believe she had any of commission. It was that enjoyment of her adventures that Aunt Eliza and my father thought was bad for us—and also for her. But it was impossible not to delight in her gay air of “ganging her ain gait” wherever it might lead that filled us with the joy of sharing her adventures as she related them. She really did *enjoy herself* with the same enthusiasm she roused in us. And though she was without malice, she enjoyed the peccadillos of her friends just as she did her own, and many were the tales she used to tell of them.

Aunt Helen married the Reverend Daniel P. Noyes. They lived first in Brooklyn, where Mr. Noyes was settled as minister. I remember the glee with which Aunt Helen used to tell of their going one evening to call on a parishioner to be met with the information that she had gone “to sit up with a corpse acquaintance.” Then they lived in New York for some years. I of course never visited them in Brooklyn; but in every other place they lived—New York, Longwood, Pigeon Cove, Wilmington, Byfield—I enjoyed their charming hospitality and themselves. At Byfield, soon after they moved there, Mr. Noyes died. They had three children, Marion, Edward, and Atherton who is married and lives in Cambridge. Cousin Marion keeps up the old home at Byfield, and has been a mother to her brother Ned's three children, Helen, Richard and Hester.

One of Aunt Helen's perhaps mistaken chari-

ties, when she lived in Byfield after her husband's death, was to take women for domestic service from the Dedham Home, a place where women were sent who had been imprisoned at the "Island" for some offence, usually drunkenness. Aunt Helen's unfailing patience with these poor creatures and the way she would follow them up, and if they fell again pay their fines and take them back into her household, was something to see and remember. Yet she once casually remarked in my hearing that if she had a husband and six sons all too much addicted to strong drink, it would *not* interest her in the least in Prohibition. Of course with such servants there could be nothing in the shape of "liquor" about the house; and once when her son Ned got a barrel of cider it was deposited in the barn under the hay; and members of the family who wanted a drink had to repair thither and suck the cider through a straw inserted in the bunghole!

Aunt Rebecca was the beauty of the family, and her beauty was of a kind that drew people's hearts to her. She had lovely dark eyes, and as a child it was joy enough for me just to look at her. She came to visit at Newark soon after I became a member of the family there. As I sat by her in the twilight she would take my hand and stroke it as she talked, and she bound me to her with the bonds of love for all time. She married first her cousin Robert Appleton, by whom she had two daughters, now Mrs. Schunemann, who has no

children, and Mrs. Charles Jackson of Boston. After Robert Appleton's death she was pestered with suitors attracted by her beauty and charm, and she soon married Mr. Upham, by whom she had one daughter, Miss Susan Upham. Like all the family, Aunt Rebecca had the most friendly and democratic interest in everyone who came within her ken; and I remember hearing that Mr. Upham once reproved her because she bowed in most kindly fashion to a man who was driving a coal cart and had been delivering coal at their house. Just as Aunt Helen or any of the sisters would have done, she had bowed pleasantly to him as she would have to butcher or baker or candlestick-maker. Had not all the sisters been brought up by Aunt Mary Jane?

LETTERS

Aunt Mary Jane to Cousin Abba.

AMHERST, March 1828

Friday

My dear Cousin, I should be most happy to show my gratitude for your kind attentions to me by sending you a very entertaining letter, but alas close confinements are not favorable to entertainment of any kind. You are losing your character for sobriety in our part of the country as fast as possible. Gadding, gadding and dancing too and

even card playing. Ah, my dear, I fear you are in a "parlous state." I have been out to ride several times and walked today from Uncle Atherton's where I stopped a few moments to see M. Ann. By the way, if dissipation agrees with you as well as it does with her, I won't object to your enjoying it a few weeks longer. I think I never saw her in finer health. . . . M. A. told me she should write and I present you with my most sincere wishes that you may not find the task of reading these various epistles too arduous.

I understand that Mr. Greely's fascinations kept Miss Clagget at Nashua. Truly, my dear, light seems to be dawning on that family. Now if Aaron would take Lucretia and Mr. Elliott would make his bow to Cornelia t'would be like the falling of some mighty avalanche ("avalanche of belles") which might possibly carry off other ladies in its train and who knows but you and I, my dear cousin, might be among the number. Your situation I think particularly favorable being so near head quarters. You see I am disposed to look on the bright side.

I hope to be able to ride on horseback tomorrow and my dear Abba, don't you stay away a great while, allow me to enjoy the pleasure of seeing my cousins together again. Pray how does Mr. Knowlton look—you, I remember, were always a prime favorite of his.

Make my suitables to those most agreeable looking people, Dr. Dalton and his wife. I used to

know Julia but it is so long since that I feel like a perfect stranger.

I wish my dear Abba that I had anything more to tell you but I find upon looking over my letter that I have indulged in a little scandal for want of something better. You will acknowledge it is prudent for me to stop, before I transgress again.

Yours M. JANE.

Aunt Mary Jane to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST, January 9th, 1837

Monday

Your kindness, my dear Uncle, has surrounded us this winter with comforts quite too numerous to mention, but not to feel. Helen and Rebecca walk about in your blue circassion. Eliza is clad in your flannel and for my own part I am a walking, breathing monument of the generous kindness of you and yours. The habit which I wear when I ride out, the gown which I wear when I stay at home, alike bear witness to the fact and soon, very soon, time and Susan Wilson permitting I hope to add the testimony of my new cloak. I know not how to thank you, my dear Uncle, for this most valuable present, its beauty is not at all impaired by the frailness of the fabric, nor do I suppose its utility will be diminished on that account, because unless in case of a tear there is little severe pull upon a ladies cloak. You enforce

your advice that we should not spend much upon the trimmings by sending us all the most expensive articles, therefore I think there is no question but we shall obey you. Accept all our heartfelt thanks then, my dearest Uncle, for all the things which I have, as well as those I have not, mentioned. . . .

We have not experienced anything of the confinement of a country winter before last week, but there was one day when nobody but George Kent ventured in to see us. You know the weather must be dreary and the calls at home most imperative that could keep Aunt Kent away from us.

Catharine seems to be full of business, she asks what we find to do. I wish the days were twice as long, what with household affairs, sewing, writing letters and hearing lessons we are busy from morning till night. Eliza is studying the History of France, Helen the History of England and Rebecca of New England. My head is in a historical puzzle of Goths and Visigoths, Puritans, Saxons and Normans. How is little Robert? The children often talk of him and wish they could see him. I am rejoiced to hear that my dear Aunt is restored to her usual health. Do you know, my beloved Uncle, that it is more than a year since I have seen you or her. I hope it is not going to be much longer but "when" "how" or "where" I can by no means see. We had a most delightful visit from Mary Aiken. She looked charmingly and Mr. Aiken whom I have hardly seen before

since his health became affected seemed to me as healthy in appearance, at least as ever. Our new meeting house is very comfortable. I believe grandmama likes it, though the change is a little painful to her no doubt as it is to many of us. To miss the accustomed places of those who shall know them no more forever can not but be a sad feeling to us. My dear Uncle, may this year be a happy one to you. God grant that that great sweetness of life, Health, may not be denied you. How strange that these merely artificial divisions of time should have power so to call up those feelings which we ought to have at all times. The expiration of the year, I believe, always makes us think more than usual of the shortness of time and the possibility that we may not be numbered among the living at the commencement of another. Give my love to all the beloved ones at Uncle Mason's, my dear Uncle. Lots of it to my dear Aunt, Susan and Cate. I am dear Uncle

Your most affectionate M. J. MEANS

Aunt Mary Jane to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST, November 2nd, 1837

My dear Uncle how I wish you could look in and see "the village mistress teach her little school." But as that alas cannot be, just lend me your imagination for a while till I make the whole matter plain to you. Behold me then seated in

Grandmama's place just under where the glass used to be (I miss it more than anything else in the room except the living furniture) Before me stands a small desk and a low chair is also arranged with a view to my near sighted infirmity; in front of me, with their faces towards the garden and their backs to their school mistress, are seated my scholars at their neat green desks. They are at this moment as busy as little button-makers studying a lesson in History. They number seven at present, I expect a little niece of Mr. Pierce's next week. He brought her over from Derry last week, where she has been at Mr. Gale's school, but as her vacation there had just commenced it did not seem fair to insist on her commencing again immediately. Mary Seaver entered school yesterday morning, she brought with her a note from Mr. Abbott (her teacher in Boston) to me, containing a very flattering testimony to her diligence and good behaviour in his school. I had been a little uneasy lest I might find some of her mother's qualities predominant. A week is hardly a fair trial but I have found the employment interesting and by no means so great an exercise of my patience as Mrs. Riley, in whose society I spent most of my time before I came over here. My scholars are most of them in excellent habits of study, but I find there are some who have been learning words without troubling themselves at all with the idea which ought to be attached to them, a habit with which I am resolved to make

a perpetual warfare. I know you are interested, my dear Uncle, in whatever betides me in this matter, so I shall make no apology for troubling you with details but just go on till I have made a clean breast of it.

Nov. 8th—Wednesday

We school mistresses never know when we can finish a letter, my dear Uncle, and mine has been suffering from the uncertainty of all things. I wish it had intrinsic merit enough to be better for keeping, but old letters and old newspapers are not like old wine, when I was obliged to put my letter away I had a head full of things which I was going on to say to you and dear Aunt and as fast as my pen could talk. But luckily some of my subjects bear keeping and one that possesses this preservative quality is Susan's engagement. I am not going to praise either her or Charles as if they had done some good thing which could not have been expected from them, I am free to confess that I should have been much surprised and even quite displeased if they had either of them done anything else in the matrimonial way. I am sure that you must like it my dear Uncle and Aunt, and am no less certain that it must be the most perfectly agreeable thing to all our friends at Newburyport. I have often talked with Jane about the probability of such an event and I wish her and all the rest of

our friends joy, upon the accomplishment of our predictions and hopes. I sent my warm love and good wishes to Susan and Charles by Catharine's letter and I desire to repeat them. I always think a duplicate ought to be dispatched when you entrust any important message to a young lady's letter.

Ah, my dear Uncle, if health would come at my call how quickly would I restore you and my beloved Mother to all its comforts and blessings, but alas I can only give you my anxious thoughts and prayers. It is well that careful thoughts and necessary efforts for the welfare of others begin to press upon us, else how could we bear to see the declining health of those who have so long cared for and watched over us. I hope we shall hear from Boston soon. I long to know whether you are not gaining a little strength under the watchful tending which I know is bestowed upon you.

How has dear Grandmama been since her visit to us, it was so hurried and so full of calls and business that I feel as though it had cheated us of half the good talks which we had anticipated. We are expecting to see Abba Means today, next week is Ordination and if ever people were likely to be kept alive by work, we may calculate upon long lives. Mother requires one person to attend upon her a good deal of the time, as she eats nothing that the rest of us do and does not go about the house at all except from her chamber to the parlour. We are cleaning house this week and

have eleven in the family and Mrs. Riley, who knows nothing and I begin to think never will, so is a great amusement to the children and if it were not for turning her out I think we should get rid of her as fast as possible. She considers being a Paddy the greatest disgrace and asks for no higher praise than being told she is an American.

Dear Uncle give my love to all the members of your family as well as Uncle Mason and do hurry Susan a little about answering Catharine's letter that we may hear from you.

Your M. J. MEANS.

Aunt Eliza to Aunt Mary Jane.

March 19, Sabbath.

Dear Mary Jane,

As mother has written to you so lately, and Ellis is to watch with Mr. Blanchard's child tonight, they leave Catharine and myself to be scribes. I accepted this office very willingly, although there is no news to tell you. Helen bids me tell you that Ma is a little sick, as usual on Sundays. It has been so cold today that she has not been out. Mr. Salter preached here today, and Mr. Aiken in Milford, rather than have us unsupplied. There is no one engaged for next Sabbath, but I heard there is a prospect of our having Mr. Hadley, who is preaching at Goffestown for a while, after that time. Mr. Adams of New Ips. a tutor at Han-

over, is coming in May to preach, & if he likes the salary, society and so forth and is liked *by* them, he will probably accept a call in the fall. Pres. Lord says he will make us a better minister than either of our two last. He is an *unmarried* gent. so there is still a chance for the desponding maidens of Amherst. Ellis (you know she is fond of the ministry) has determined to set her cap for him, although as she has heard he is very grave there is not much chance of her succeeding. I have now given you an account of the ecclesiastical affairs of the town. Now for the more sublunary concerns. Last Thursday Aunt West spent the day with us, & Grandma and Aunt Appleton the afternoon. They staid to tea but went home directly after, because Grandma did not wish to be out after dark. She was as gay as a bird and says "she wishes Aunt Mason, Lawrence and Uncle Robert would come up and take what they want and march off, for she wishes to clear the house." If it were possible I would tell you the praises your letter rec'd from your numerous relations, but alas! my attempt would be in vain. Be content with knowing it was unanimously agreed there never was a better or more satisfactory letter written or rec'd since the knowledge of man. I suspect Kate will think my share of the paper is rather large, but she has the faculty of writing across which (I haven't) expect she will have to put in use unless I soon bid you good night.

ELIZA.

Aunt Mary Jane and Aunt Ellis to Aunt Eliza.

Friday Morning.

Aunt Nancy came safely, dear Eliza, and brought your packages for which I am much obliged to you. I should think the cotton would do very well and the gloves you sent me are beautiful. I wanted such a pair very much. I bought a pair when I was in Boston, but they were light kid and afterwards I was very sorry I did not get the open work ones. I thank you for them with all my heart, my dear Eliza. You complain that we have not written you anything but notes and I believe this is true, though it has been accidental, but I will now endeavour to give you a history of our proceedings. The week Elizabeth was here we had a good deal of going about from one cause or another. The Athertons were at Uncle A's, and as Mary Anne had just returned from her journey and was not prepared for them we endeavoured to do as much as possible to relieve her. They drank tea here one day, and the next we were all down there. The next day we were invited to the Doctor's but I could not go because Mr. and Mrs. Shedd of Dayton, Ohio, (Mr. Adams' brother and sister) were coming to pass the afternoon with me. On the following Monday the Athertons went away. The girls have been to ride and walk a good deal and the young people have been very attentive in calling in for the evening, but this has left me quite at leisure (after my household duties are attended

to) to sew for myself and both Caty and Ellis have helped.

Last week on Friday they went to Purgatory on horseback at least Caty, Joanna, Alfred and Mr. Murry did; Harriet, Abba, Mary Newton and William went in a carryall. They could not get horses for a larger party. The next day a party went in chaises and wagons, consisting of William and Adelia Newton, Caty Boylston and Mr. Tuttle, Murry and Ellis—they all enjoyed it very much, I believe. This week they have staid at home most of the time, until last evening when we were all invited to Mrs. Boylston's. She sent for us all—Helen and Rebecca inclusive—day before yesterday. I sent word that four of us would go, but it rained so much we could none of us go out that evening and yesterday she sent with a basket full of beautiful corn for our dinners a request that we would everyone of us come, accordingly we all went ("little dogs and all"). We had a very pleasant time but I left early that I might call on Mrs. Dalton, knowing I should not be able to go out this forenoon. The children are very good and quite industrious since school finished. Rebecca is making up her quilted petticoat for winter (she did not quilt it). I asked her this morning to carry some rags over to the store, to which her little ladyship replied that she thought it was degrading to a person of her birth. Kitty improves in stature and mischief and is by no means so great a favorite of mine as she was when she kept snug in the

peck by the stove enjoying happiness *in a measure*. Tell Uncle Robert that Sophia Kendrick has opened a juvenile singing school here and I send the children. She has had great success in teaching at Nashua. Her first lessons were given yesterday when she had about forty pupils. For my single self I go out very little but quite as much as I wish. I am going to N. Ipswich some time before long to take leave of Mrs. Adams. Shall go and return the same day. The garden looks quite pretty, Caty has pulled up the weeds and made it look very neat. I will not close my letter until the girls come home that Ellis may send some message about the muslins. Aunt Nancy seems very much benefited by her journey. She looks very bright and happy.

Will you buy me some charcoal dear E. and send it by Abba Spalding? Can you not buy it by the half pound? Write how you are, you know you said in one letter you were not quite well. Do not show my letter.

Yours, M. J. MEANS.

My dear Eliza,

I thank you very much for your kindness in regard to my dress, but really the patterns you sent are so very homely that I can not persuade myself to wear one of them. A very pretty one of pink, purple or blue is what I want. I am not particular to have a cheap one, at least I would

give 50c for a pretty one, but you need not trouble yourself much now about it for I do not need it just now and perhaps I shall have a better choice before long. I think I shall have a lawn, if not a very nice muslin. The veil and charcoal are very acceptable as I really wanted them both; the one to preserve the whiteness of my complexion, and the other to do the same good office for my teeth. Katie and I have just been over to see Mrs. Dalton and Harriet. H. is a sweet girl and we hate to have her go away. Joanna too is a very good lively girl. I wish you were at home to enjoy her visit.

I suppose that M. J. has told you all about everything, but one thing I will tell you (in private). Everything begins to look exceedingly like getting married here. When are you coming home dear E.? We long for the light of your countenance "more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning." Love to all dear friends.

ELLIS.

Aunt Mary Jane to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST, July 4th, 1839

I was just beginning to write to you yesterday, my dearest Uncle and Aunt, when I remembered that the furniture would probably arrive last evening and that you would be glad to hear it was safe. I found the packages from Adams' and the

crockery had come to Nashua the evening before, it was all quite safe in the Depot when we got there. I gave Edward a list of the other articles as Mr. Adams was not there. The weather had looked so dubious here in the morning that he doubted whether we would leave Boston, but he was waiting to see how it would be at our house when the stage came in. Caty was made a little sick by the ride and we rode the last 5 miles on the driver's seat and found it very comfortable. The girls were well and I need not say rejoiced to see us. Our friends too were all in their usual health except poor Mary Anne who had an ill turn a few days before, it was not one of the worst but she suffered much. She is recovering now but looks very ill still to me, and speaks with the greatest confidence with regard to the source of this attack. It was her head she says, she is sure and not her stomach. Except going down to see her it took all my time to unpack and put away the things that we brought with us and I did not do it without many reflections upon the friends who had made the business a pretty serious one. Elisa Merrill (our good girl) came back just before tea, she is better and hopes she shall be able to get along with her work. William came in the evening and we had quite a large family to go to meeting next day. I spent Monday in household investigations until evening when I went over to see Aunt Spalding. There is quite a noise in our quiet little village today, Charles Atherton is to deliver a 4th

of July oration before the *pure democracy* of the State and they are to have a great dinner afterwards. Luckily Uncle is not at home to be tried with the question "to go, or not to go" and nobody else among his friends here care to appear on the occasion.

But to return to the furniture, it all came last evening. Mr. Adams opened it and we took our breakfast on Archibald's table this morning and the whole family, Mr. Adams inclusive, pronounce it just the thing. Not a single thing was broken or injured and I have by great diligence and much good assistance had everything put in place this morning. The work table is beautiful and I felt this morning that I could not wait any longer to have you come and see how the house looks. The front room really looks smiling. The carpet is so bright, the table cloth, lamp, and work table are all so pretty and the sun shines so beautifully to enlighten and enliven the whole. Amherst never looked better, everything is so green and luxuriant. When I left your house, my beloved friends, I felt that I was leaving a place that had been to me as a home and I do not believe I shall ever have the painful feeling of separation from a place where every domestic joy has met, more strongly than I did there. May peace and prosperity be within its wall, though I shall not be there again as in times past. It makes me sad to think it is so; but I must tell you Helen and Rebecca's plan, they said the other day "*that if Uncle and Aunt L.*

ever grow poor they hoped they would come and live with us." Caty has been nicely ever since her return, I can perceive more plainly even than when we were in Boston how much her strength has increased, she does a great many little things for me that do not require **lifting** or any special effort in the arms and does not seem at all fatigued. I am well as usual when I have constant active and pressing employment, I feel quite well, but when I rest I am poorly. Next week I intend to do something for myself, though I apprehend no ill consequences from my disordered system while I exercise so freely.

The Democratic dinner was rather a failure in point of numbers, they had only about half as many as they prepared for. The children wish me to send you their love and thank you for the baskets and Rebecca very judiciously adds "I thank them for the other things that we shall have part of and be sure to give my love." The baskets are in active use already. Ellis is delighted with the shawl but is not here to send messages. She intends to go to Lowell for a few days after her school finishes. Mary Aiken has sent to beg her to make her a short visit, she says she wants her company before her mother returns. Something has been said about her going to New York with Mary Anne week after next, her father will not consent to her going without some lady, they are not certain of going however and Ellis has not been regularly

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invited. She means to go to Lowell for a few days at any rate.

Love to all at Uncle Masons. Be so good as to mention how Robert Appleton is when you write. My love to him. Be sure to let little Robert come in August, the little girls depend upon it.

Your M. J. MEANS.

Aunt Mary Jane to Aunt Catharine.

My dear Caty. I have just left the ironing table to write you a line. I hope we shall hear from you today and that you will be able to give a good account of yourself. We go on in much the same way, struggling between housework and sewing: but I hope to see more leisurely times when Mrs. Conway comes and gets acquainted with the work. Mr. Adams inquired the other day what sort of a cap I intended to wear when I was married, and begged it might not have a high crown nor a full border, I found he was so particular that I begin to despair of making anything to please him, when I have so much to hurry me, so I want you to do something for me. Miss Burr once had a great reputation for making caps for people in my circumstances who had had their hair cut off. She is married I know, but her sister keeps in Beacon St. near Tremont St. Will you look at her caps if she has any on hand, if not ask her to make one for a *young lady* whose hair is short, you may mention the occasion on which it is to be worn or not as you

think best. I do not care whether it is trimmed with white or some delicate colour, whether it has delicate flowers in it or not. All this I will submit to your, and her taste, but it must not have a high crown or full & heavy border. I would send the money but it would make double postage.

Has Robert Lawrence returned yet & has he recovered from his cold? Love to him & dear Uncle & Aunt & to all at Uncle Masons. Everybody asks when you are coming back & we begin to ask ourselves.

Your M. J. MEANS.

Aunt Catharine to Uncle Lawrence.

AMHERST, Sept 25, 1839

My dear Uncle & Aunt:

You will be glad to hear of my arrival at home. The girls expected me, and I was convinced that, hard as it was to leave my kind friends in Boston I did right to come. I find I can be of great assistance to dear Mary Jane and have enlisted in her service, determined to be active with my needle or in other ways until everything is done. I think matters are getting along pretty well, and she will be ready quite as soon as the house is. Mr. Knight the carpenter is obliged to do the work almost alone, can get no help except now and then in rainy days, the plastering is done, the closets are partitioned off, the chimney is up and they are now finishing the closets with shelves and drawers, it has

been painted once on the outside; the inside is to be done next week. Mr. Adams has not yet returned, no time has been appointed for the wedding, but I think it will take place in about 4 weeks perhaps not quite so soon (this is my impression) of course I cannot say what the parties do not know. Ellis is chief cook, i. e. for breakfast and dinner. Eliza, who is rather troubled with dyspepsia, takes the more genteel meal of supper as her part. I hear her now stirring some cakes for tea. Helen and Rebecca have just gone to their singing school, they sew considerably and are anticipating a visit to Lowell with a great deal of pleasure. Uncle and Abba gave them a kind invitation to return with them after the wedding. M. J. has not been able to get a girl but has it now in her power to sew more, since the girls have relieved her of the cooking, they would willingly have done it long ago, if she had been willing to give it up.

My cold is much better today, but the weather has been unpleasant and I have not been out since returning, therefore, my dear Uncle and Aunt, I cannot tell you so much about the appearance of the addition from without. Mary Jane says there is some defect in the windows at the end (which you know is next the graveyard) but it has been done during Mr. A's absence and I suspect he will have it put right when he returns. As I rode up to the door I thought the building looked very well. I delivered your message, dear Uncle, giving Mr. Adams "full power to make repairs on the build-

ings and fences" was not that the message? to M. J. and she said that Mr. A. thought and Mr. Knight said the roof was old and must be shingled at all events because it is decayed and leaks very much and both agreed that it would be best to have it raised, you know it is a flat roof. I told M. J. that I should tell you and you could judge, but I thought you would like to know if Mr. Adams thought so, as you had sent this word by me, and wished to have nothing undone or to do over. Mr. Adams did not expect to have it done I believe. M. J. does not know that I am writing so particularly, so my dear Uncle, if I have done improperly to mention it do not blame her. The outer buildings are to be done last, after the addition is completed.

My dear Uncle and Aunt, I had the most delightful visit that ever was to you, enjoyed every moment, my rides and walks, talks and books to say nothing of the lions and amusing things that crossed my path.

Oh Aunt, Mary Jane is very much pleased with her cap. I do not think she could be better suited than she is. She, with all the others send a great deal of love to you and thanks you again and again for the pens, handkerchiefs, gloves, holder and all your kindness and love. Mary J. bids me say that she shall write to you as soon she can find time and say for herself her love to you all. I have many questions to answer about Robert, and please to tell him with my love that I

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think of him a great deal and what pleasant times we had together over the Latin grammar and our other frolics. I hope he gets 5's all the time.

I promised to write everything and have I not kept my word? Do excuse the jumble and believe me full of affection.

Your loving neice KATIE.

CHAPTER X

MY FATHER AND MY UNCLES

When Catharine Means died three years after her husband, in 1838, her older children were grown up, though none of them was married, and the sons were scattered. Robert, the eldest, born in 1809, was a genial lovable kind of man, but seems to have lacked stability. He was something of a rolling stone, until after his second marriage he never stayed long in one place, and I think he caused his parents and sisters some anxiety. But he was an affectionate son and brother, and evidently a popular young fellow. He was somewhat of a beau, and wrote many verses addressed, for the most part, to young ladies of his acquaintance. When a young man he left Amherst with his cousin, William Appleton, to seek his fortune in what was then called the West. They went to Cincinnati where Uncle Robert married Eliza W. Clarke, a widow, I think. I do not know that any of his family ever saw her, as she died a few months after the marriage. In Cincinnati, also, William Appleton died, and Robert went to Kentucky, where his cousin Alfred Spalding settled somewhat later at Greenupsburg. Aunt Mary Jane went out there, too, to visit the Seatons; and years after, when Mr. Seaton died, she wrote a beautiful letter of sympathy and understanding and gratitude to

Mrs. Seaton. I think Uncle Robert returned home with Aunt Mary Jane, but I know little of what happened for some years.

When I was a little girl Uncle Robert came to Manchester, and for some time was an inmate of my father's house. While there he was made city marshal. I had no idea what that might signify; but it sounded rather magnificent, almost royal, and I was filled with pride to have such a distinguished man for my dearly loved uncle. And while in Manchester, also, he became engaged to Mrs. S. J. James, a widow with one daughter, who lived in Exeter. And this brings me to the tale of my first adventure—or what I chose to consider one. Uncle Robert was going to drive from Manchester to Exeter to “spend Sunday”—or as we say now, the week-end—with the lady of his choice, and he begged my parents to allow me to go with him. I must have been about seven years old, and my heart was filled with pride that I should be chosen for such a distinguished honor. Certainly no prouder little girl ever set sail for foreign lands than this little girl took her place in the “four-wheeled chaise” as we called a “buggy” in those days, and set forth to see a prospective Aunt Jane. We reached Exeter without mishap, and I remember only two things about my visit—one a horrible picture called “The Nightmare” of a woman, starting from sleep and being clutched by some dreadful beast dimly defined in the background. And the other thing I remember

is my intense mortification when I rocked so hard in a high-backed rocker that I tipped over backwards. I was not at all hurt, but deeply ashamed of myself; Aunt Jane most affectionately consoled me and in a measure restored my self-respect. But it was on our way home to Manchester that I met with my real adventure. Somewhere in the woods between the two places I was conscious that the buggy wobbled, and before I realized that there was any real trouble, kerflop, one of the rear wheels came off and we were let down with a bang. There was nothing for it but for Uncle Robert to unhitch the horse and ride off for assistance. He kindly asked me if I was afraid to be left. Afraid? Here was I in the midst of what I fondly thought an adventure, and afraid to act well my part? Perish the thought! No, I was *not* afraid! So Uncle Robert, leaving me in charge of the wrecked buggy, rode off. It seemed a good while before he came back, with a man and tools. Together they put the wheel on properly and we proceeded without further excitement to our destination. But through all my childish years I regarded this event as my first adventure: for I had never heard of any little girl being left alone in the woods in charge of a broken down carriage while her uncle went for help.

Of "Aunt Jane" I have a vivid recollection. She was a handsome and picturesque woman of great capabilities, and I am afraid she had a flattering tongue which, however, she used in good faith.

Once after Uncle Robert's death, she surprised me by saying earnestly: "Annie, your father is one of the best men that ever lived. Why I don't know, but he *is* the best." She had every appearance of meaning it, but I am afraid my dear father's daughter was more amused than impressed. When they were first married, Uncle Robert brought Aunt Jane to Manchester and they lived at the City Hotel, where I frequently went to see them. But later Exeter became their home, although once more, during that time, Uncle Robert went West, and was even elected mayor of Sioux City, much to the amusement of his brothers and sisters.

James, the second and best-loved son and brother, was graduated from Bowdoin College and studied for the ministry at Andover Seminary. While there he met and loved the lady who was to become his wife—Miss Elizabeth P. Johnson. Like his sister Helen, Uncle James was generously endowed with the gift of charm. Yet at the same time in his religious principles he was stern, not to say severe; and he had early accepted the doctrines of the Christian religion as it was then taught according to Orthodox Congregational standards. Aunt Nancy, in her Diary, complains of my father's too great devotion to orthodoxy; and I think Uncle James, perhaps because he was a minister, felt a kind of pastoral care over his spiritual welfare. Once when my father and mother were away from home, Uncle James preached at Manchester, and in writing to my

father of his disappointment at not seeing them he added that he took the liberty of asking Deacon Baldwin—and was reassured by him—as to my father's religious work in the church. As for Aunt Nancy, I have already alluded to the charming and affectionate letter written to her by Uncle James in which he warns her firmly but lovingly of the awful destiny which awaits her if she persists in adhering to the Unitarian belief. He evidently believed that no Unitarian had any right to hope for mercy hereafter. Yet his theological belief in no way affected his personal charm, and I remember the great joy in our household whenever he came to see us. What did we children care for his theology when the mere sight of him was a delight to us? He and my father had some traits in common, and neither of them cared a pin for the conventionalities of life. For instance, my Uncle James while living in Andover acquired a donkey for his children and, like the famous donkey in Mother Goose, the said donkey sometimes "wouldn't go," when my uncle would be called upon to see what he could do. I remember his coming out of the house in a flowered dressing-gown, gaily embroidered slippers, no hat, and mounting the refractory beast, which started off full tilt about the town to the joy of all spectators. I have never seen either horse or donkey that would not go for my father or uncle, or my brother Jim. When Uncle James moved away from Andover and we moved into his house, we found that the donkey

was left to our care, much to the satisfaction of my brothers. In those ancient days it was customary for any man who dealt in sea-food to ride through the town blowing a fish-horn to notify the householders that if they wanted any fish they must hail him. One morning at breakfast my mother said, "I don't see where that fish man goes. I send out to stop him and he can never be found." A shout of laughter came from her children, who explained that the sound she heard was the bray of the donkey!

My father's indifference to conventionality showed itself in a somewhat different way. I remember his bringing home one day a large piece of blue veiling and asking my sister Mary to make him a veil with an elastic which could be snapped around the crown of his tall white hat that he might wear it in the cars as he went between Boston and Beach Bluff, to enable him to enjoy the air without being troubled by cinders. The veil was made as he desired and used by him during the hot season. Our pew in the Boston church was directly in front of Deacon K.'s, a gentleman who liked to fan himself vigorously—perhaps to keep himself awake. At any rate my father greatly disliked having the back of his neck fanned, so he used to take out his large handkerchief, and spreading it over the top of his head in such a way that it fell like a curtain over the back of his neck, proceeded to enjoy the sermon. My dear mother used to say: "Your father is never tedious, dear." I

could write a whole book of reminiscences of my childhood and my father and his ways. I think the prophecy was often made—sometimes by his friends—that he would never die in his bed. Indeed he often appeared most reckless, but no harm ever came to him, and he died most peacefully in his bed on the fourth of January, 1894, to the great sorrow of his children and of many others who knew and loved him.

My father and Uncle James had the same birthday, April 27, two years apart, and Uncle James was the only person I ever heard call my father "Bill," and I fancy he was the only one who called the other "Jim." They were like two boys together, and we children shared all the fun there was, and that was much when Uncle James was to the fore. He teased us, told us stories, asked all sorts of ridiculous questions. I remember his particular joke with me was to pretend that I should have to be a "factory girl" in order to earn money to help my father bring up his rapidly increasing family. Uncle James was a great traveller, and when in 1906 a party of us went up the Nile, "James Means, 1852," was discovered inscribed on a rock near the Second Cataract. He had made that journey in days when it was considered a great feat to do so. He often joined Cousin Edward in his expeditions to the Canadian woods. He preached in a number of New England towns after his graduation until his marriage, in 1840, when he settled as minister of the Congregational Church

at Concord, Massachusetts. He left there to become Principal of the Lawrence Academy at Groton, and thereafter his profession was teaching rather than preaching.

When the Civil War came, Uncle James was appointed Government Superintendent of Freedmen, with headquarters at Newbern, North Carolina. The negroes were pouring into the Union lines in great numbers and in a very destitute condition. The work of caring for them was heavy, and Uncle James called for the help of his brother Robert and his nephew, my brother William. Uncle James contracted typhoid, and died in April, 1863. William brought his body home to Andover for burial, and very soon thereafter we heard that Uncle Robert had died suddenly of apoplexy at Beaufort. Thus in one month both my father's brothers were taken; and William had to return without delay to the place which had been so fatal to them to settle their affairs and collect their belongings. It was a great responsibility for a boy of twenty-three, especially as he was deeply attached to his uncles, who also had had a warm affection for him. But there was no question as to his duty, and no moment's hesitation in performing it to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. Uncle Robert had no children; but Uncle James left three daughters, Katherine, Lilla and Emily Adams—the latter named for Aunt Mary Jane's little girl who died—and a son, David



ANNE M. AND WILLIAM A. MEANS



McGregor, named for his grandfather, who lives in New York.

My father, the third and youngest son of David and Catharine Means, born in 1815, was named for the first husband of his mother's oldest sister Frances, Aunt West. In a short record of his early life, written a few weeks after his father's death in 1835, William states: "I went to school in Amherst until I was twelve years of age, and after that attended the Pinkerton Academy at Derry until I came to Boston September 4, 1830, and commenced my business career on that date with Daniel McGregor [a brother-in-law of Aunt Kent's daughter Mary, who had married James McGregor] and stayed with him until June, 1834, when I left him by his advice and consent, and came to live with Robert Appleton in whose store I now am." William was evidently much impressed by his father's character, and henceforth determined to live the Christian life to which his father had exhorted him; but apparently he did not "join the church" until just after his mother's death when he became a member of the church at Amherst. Shortly before his mother's death, he wrote to Aunt Kent, according to a letter of hers, asking her to come to Amherst to be with his sisters; but, as I have said elsewhere, Aunt Mary Jane always was the head of the family.

It must have been soon after his mother's death that William obtained the position of clerk of the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company at Manchester,

with the munificent salary of eight hundred dollars per annum. He was already engaged to be married to Martha Allen of Newton; and this new position seemed to him to offer the opportunity of marrying with prudence. As no one appears to have thought differently, he and Martha, on the twenty-sixth of February, 1840, were married in the parlor of her aunt, Miss Ann Bent, who lived at what was then 216 Washington Street, Boston.

Miss Bent—or, as she was always called by the younger generation, Aunt Nancy—lived over the shop which she had kept for many years to supply fine dress goods to the ladies of Boston. As she grew older the business was carried on by my mother's sister, Ann Middleton Allen, who, in her turn, gave it over, on her marriage to Nathaniel Tracy of Medford, to her brother William H. Allen. He had married his cousin, Sarah Kinsley, and lived, with his family and Aunt Nancy, over the shop and carried on the business there until the building was destroyed by the Great Boston Fire in 1872.

I must here digress for a moment to pay my tribute to Aunt Ann Tracy, for whom I was named. My dear mother was never strong and how she would have managed without the Family Providence in the shape of Aunt Ann, I do not know. Aunt Ann, who had no children of her own, had a way of swooping down upon our rapidly growing family whenever the need was greatest, and removing one or more of the "troublesome comforts" to

her own home in Medford. She watched over us, mended our clothes or supplied us with new ones, and cared for us in every way. Before I went to Newark, I spent half my childhood with her. Before my time, Aunt Ann had brought up some children of a brother who had died, and I remember hearing her say one day to a caller: "I tried strictness with my older nieces, but I am trying indulgence with this one"—indicating me—"and I find it answers just as well."

When my father and mother were married, the railway went no farther north than Lowell, so they completed their journey to Manchester by stage-coach. After a brief stay at the principal hotel, they set up housekeeping in a little two-story brick house opposite the canal that belonged to the corporation; and in that little house I think they lived for about four years. There were born Willy, or Billie, Annie, and Patty; and when I was about three we moved into a much larger house. It was necessary, as babies were constantly arriving: there was always a baby in the family, and I attribute my early indifference to dolls to the fact that I found live babies much more interesting. In due time came "Bobby" and Mary—familiarly "Tot"—and a little boy who died when he was four months old. The great consolation for this loss came to my mother two years later when the next baby was born, my brother Charles, who to the end of his days, brought happiness wherever he might be.

One often hears what a comfort children are in

time of trouble, but few persons consider what it all means to the child. I was a perfectly normal little animal and liked all the fun there was going; I cannot say I sorrowed deeply over my little brother's death, and I optimistically believed that God would take care of him. But what did create a deep impression on my childish mind was my mother's grief. I think I knew instinctively that nothing could help that, and I suffered in that knowledge, for I loved her better than anyone in the world. Many, many years after that little brother died, when I was more than a middle-aged woman, heavy grief came to me in my home at Andover. My brother Jim and his family were boarding near me, and his children played all over the place. Sometimes when I was sitting in the living-room trying to read or write there would be a click of the front door, and looking up I would see a small figure in "rompers" entering in no uncertain fashion. Closing the door she would come directly to me, perch on the arm of my chair and put her arms around my neck to draw my head close to her. She would say no word, but silently sit there for two or three minutes, then bend down and kiss me gently and run away to her play. And I used to wonder if I had thought of comforting my mother like that whether it would have helped her. But no, little Agnes had the gift: it was hers alone.

I think my mother was the gentlest human being I ever saw. I never heard her speak an

ungentle word, though she did not hesitate to reprove her children when they needed it. My sister once said that mother could pack more condemnation and severity into a single sentence, and in a perfectly gentle voice deliver it where it was due, than anyone else could put into a whole torrent of speaking their minds. That was true: she "gave you to think." She had beautiful large soft eyes; a few most expressive gestures; a most delicious sense of humor.

Charles in 1859 was the last of the children to be born at Manchester. Before that time my father had left the Amoskeag Company, and with several other gentlemen had formed and built the Manchester Locomotive Works, with Mr. John A. Burnham of Boston as president and my father as treasurer. But it was not a happy time to start such an enterprise, and after two or three years' struggle, the partners, to save themselves from failure, closed the shop and sought other lines for their support. My father became treasurer of the Salmon Falls Manufacturing Company, which, in 1859, necessitated our leaving Manchester. His office was in Boston, but he had to visit Salmon Falls once a week, and Andover was selected for our home as it was on the direct railway line between the two places. Then Andover became truly the home of our affections, and we all loved it from the first. My brother Will was already a student there at Phillips Academy, and some years before my Uncle James had bought a house there

which he was willing to rent to us, as he had just accepted the post of Principal of the Academy in West Lebanon. We lived in his house until after Uncle James's death in 1863 when his family wished to return to Andover; so my father bought another house on the Main Street in Andover and fitted it up for our use. It was a comfortable house enough, and we had a happy life there; and there, soon after we moved in, my brother James was born. There, also, when she was nineteen years old, my sister Patty died. One of my aunts told me that Patty looked and appeared more like our grandmother, Catharine Means, than any of the other grandchildren. I remember her as being preternaturally quick in all her senses. Literally, what she could not see was not visible to mortal eyes; and her hearing was as quick as her sight. Nothing escaped her. She had an exceedingly nervous temperament, and almost from babyhood had severe headaches. When she was three or four, the doctor advised having her head shaved. The other children were sent off to play, and when we returned, the barber had done his work and there was our tiny sister with her head as smooth as a billiard ball. Mother made her dainty little caps to wear until her hair grew again, which it did in due time; but all her life, as if to match her delicate senses, it was so fine that one could hardly see a single hair by itself.

My father was much less strict in our bringing up than many fathers of that day. He had no

objection to my going to dancing school, when Aunt Ann Tracy thought best, nor to our playing cards among ourselves. But if we were well, we *must* go to church twice on Sunday, and also to Sunday school. No doubt a direct consequence of this rule was a certain malady known in the family circle as "Sunday sickness"; but my father was quite clever enough to find the remedy for this ailment. If we thought ourselves too ill to go to church, he considered us too ill to be about the house, and we must spend the day in bed, a far worse thing than going to church. I do not remember that the daughters of the family were ever visited with this particular disease, but at about this time a more trying ailment fastened itself upon my youngest sister, "Tot," who now sought relief from anything she disliked in floods of tears. A rough word, a small disappointment, the boys' teasing, everything and anything seemed to unloose the fountains; and, alas, the most afflictive source of her woe seemed to be the long prayer in church. She was a pretty little girl and would trip off to church as happy as a little girl should be; but the long prayer was a trial she could not endure, and as soon as it began the tears began to flow. I hit upon a remedy, for the time being, by surreptitiously administering, at the beginning of the long prayer, a large gum drop or other bit of soft candy. But this was only efficacious for church; and everything we could think of to cure her was tried in vain. Then, suddenly, the sound of weeping was

no longer heard in the land. When I questioned Tot as to how the change was wrought, she said: "Why, it came to me all at once that the way to stop teasing was not to cry, but to answer back." Tears were no longer resorted to. She promptly adopted the new method, became extraordinarily proficient in the art, and to the end of her life it never failed her.

In my day, questions of religious dogma no longer dominated society as at Amherst in the time of Doctor Lord and Mrs. Charles Atherton, Aunt Nancy and Mr. Mott; yet Andover was more or less steeped in theology, and most of the young men I knew were "theologues." Questions of doctrine were more or less to the fore, and when the girls felt they were outgrowing the youthful charms of the Academy boys and advancing to the theologue stage of masculine development, they were ready to discuss with the students of Doctor Park such points as Jonathan Edwards's doctrine of the awful destiny of infants who were unfortunate enough to die unbaptized, or the orthodoxy of last Sunday's sermon. But we did have more worldly pleasures: in winter we skated and coasted; and we went on sleigh-rides to neighboring towns where we partook of just as "temperate" suppers as you could procure today. We even had dancing parties occasionally, when no theologues were invited. Not that theologues always behaved with the strict propriety which their profession called for. I shall never forget one of my parties where

all the young men were studying for the ministry. All went well and pleasantly until after supper, when one of the young men began to suffer from what my brother calls "a coffee jag." He proposed a game of "forfeits" with himself as judge, and ordained, when the first forfeit was held up, that the owner should "Bow to the wittiest, kneel to the prettiest and kiss the one he loves best." The owner was also a gentleman, and turning quickly to a bright entertaining girl bowed profoundly, then to an exceedingly pretty one and bent one knee before her, and last to an old friend and lifting her hand brushed the tips of her fingers with his lips. It was well and gracefully done; but of course the game was broken up, and also the party. The girls said it was growing late and they must be going home; and finally when only the guilty young man was left, he apologized to me by laying all the blame on the excellence of my coffee. He said he ought never to drink more than one small cup, and he had been tempted beyond his strength to partake of a second cup. I advised him in future to confine his coffee-drinking to his own domestic circle, and the incident was closed. I cannot but reflect that though on festive occasions I have many times served wine in moderation to my guests, this was the first and only time anyone has been the worse for drinking at my table.

We continued to live in Andover until 1871 when my father, finding the daily car ride between

Andover and Boston too tiresome in winter, moved his family to a house on Hancock Street, in Boston, where we lived until 1879. My brother William had then married and was living in Marlborough Street and my father bought the Commonwealth Avenue house, where he lived and died, which is still my winter home. A few years later, thinking the sea air would benefit my mother's health in summer, he sold the Andover house, and bought a place in Swampscott on the edge of Marblehead. It seemed as if all connection of our family with Andover had now ceased; but you never can tell. We spent our summers by the sea as long as our father lived, and for two or three years after his death until the Swampscott house was sold in the settlement of his estate. Then my sister and I, for love of the place and people, turned our thoughts toward Andover once more, and built Briarfield. Though the first summer there was full of sorrow and trouble, I think we were glad to be among old friends and neighbors, and perhaps, also, we were helped through those sorrowful days by having to do and decide so many things about our new house.

My oldest brother, William Allen, was the first one of the family to marry. When he went to the Centennial celebration in Philadelphia, he met again the lady, Miss Sophia P. Sword, with whom he had been in love from the time when as a young man he had been in business there. They were married in 1877. Two daughters, Martha and Mary McGregor, were born of this marriage,

Martha marrying F. Gilbert Hinsdale of New York, and Mary, Horace Farnham Field of Mattapoisett. My brothers, Robert Lawrence and Charles Tracy, were married in the same year, 1883, the former to Jessie Maria Whitman of New York, and the latter to his cousin Elizabeth A. French of Manchester, New Hampshire. Charles, who was connected for many years with the Manchester Locomotive Works at Manchester, was a most popular and beloved citizen. On the occasion of his marriage, a number of carriages were congregated at the railway station to take the guests to the ceremony. A traveling man, who saw the carriages as he stepped out of the station, called out: "What's going on here, a funeral?" A voice from the crowd: "About as bad, Charlie Means is going to be married!" Charles, also, had two daughters: Louise Fabens and Katharine Atherton, the former marrying Richard Harrington Harris, the latter Joshua Deane Perkins. In January, 1892, James, my youngest brother, married Agnes Bankson of Philadelphia, whom he had met at his brother Will's marriage when he was a boy of fourteen and she was eleven. Their children are James McGregor, Lloyd Bankson, and Agnes.

In 1890, my father and mother, with great rejoicing of children and friends, celebrated their Golden Wedding in the Boston house. From 1865, when my sister Patty died, until 1891, twenty-six years, there was no break in our family; and those were very happy years, for, as a family, we were very

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clannish. In 1891 my brother Will died, and it was a great shock to us all. Then came my mother's death in 1892, and on January 4, 1894, my father died.

CHAPTER XI

AMHERST: EARLY VISITS.

Thus far my story of Amherst has been chiefly taken from the records contained in old family letters, together with such information as I have gathered from the older members of the two families when many of them were still with us. But now I must take up the tale of my own memories and experiences in the old town as I have known it.

As long as we lived in Manchester the red letter days when my father drove us over to Amherst, some twelve miles distant, stood out always in our anticipation and in our memory as days of joy. Then, on a high day or holiday, my father would hire a carry-all and pair and carry my mother and as many of their offspring as it was considered judicious to take visiting to spend the day with Aunt Spalding and Cousin Abba. It was always a grand occasion. We children were washed and brushed and dressed in our best, and we were out for a good time when we were going to Amherst. I had never heard of any other Amherst, but I had heard of Amherst College; and as I was one of those children who are often too shy to clear up an uncertainty by asking a question, I looked around the Plain and decided that the old court house near the cemetery must be Amherst College.

We always had most beautiful times on these visits. Aunt Spalding fed us with dainties, and we were given free range of the barn and garden. Most delightful of all there was a little black-eyed girl, who was as full of mischief as her skin could hold, to play with—Rebecca Davis, Cousin Abba's daughter. I was much older than she, and regarded her with disapproval, but fascination. She was bubbling with life, and the effervescence sometimes brought her into trouble. Many years later she told me that when she was first considered old enough to go to church, one Sunday she became so active in her play within the family pew that her pranks disturbed not only her neighbors, but her father, the minister, who stopped short in the midst of his sermon and—just looked at her. Startled at the sudden silence, she looked up to find not only her father's eyes but those of the whole congregation fixed upon her. Whereupon she subsided meekly into a seat beside her mother and, like her own little daughter some thirty years later, became deeply interested in sitting still.

These pleasant visits ceased for me when I went to school in Newark; and after we moved to Andover my first visit to Amherst was, I think, in 1860, when we went up there to the centennial celebration of the town. The date of its incorporation was January 18, but in consideration of that cold and snowy season the celebration was postponed until the thirtieth of May. Mrs. McGregor,

who then owned the Robert Means house, invited my father and mother, my brother Robert and myself to be her guests, and join in the festivities of the occasion. I was a schoolgirl, not quite seventeen years old, and not much less shy than I had been as a child. Robert was a boy of thirteen. We left Andover on a beautiful spring morning, and my father drove us to Lowell, where he put up the horse and we took the early morning train for Amherst. When we reached our destination, the town was all a-gog—flags flying, bands playing, citizens marching, bells ringing. It was one of those times when we were at once in the midst of things without many preliminaries of conventional welcome.

The Honorable Horace Greeley, a native of Amherst, was to be orator of the day, and I sat directly behind him on a kind of grandstand which had been erected on the Common. I remember his appearance very well, and recall saying to myself: "He looks like a dusty miller." The oration, as I remember it, had nothing whatever to do with the town or its history, but was chiefly about conditions in Europe, and very likely had been prepared for some other occasion. Perhaps Greeley should be pardoned for having no burning interest in the town, as he had left it at the age of ten; and moreover as he was born in an old farmhouse which stood then, as it stands now, on the line between Amherst and Bedford, we may say that it was only by a lucky chance for him that he

was born on the Amherst side of the house. Fifty years later, when the town was celebrating its next important anniversary, a Boston newspaper complained that the only event of any importance to the world which had occurred there, the birth of Horace Greeley, was hardly mentioned. But if Greeley is not blamed because the town did not loom large in his imagination and memory, neither should the town be blamed for not celebrating his birth, as well as its own, at its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

Mrs. McGregor had filled her house full of guests. There were her own three daughters, and Mr. Charles Hale, editor of the "Boston Advertiser," who was then engaged to Fanny McGregor; Mr. Hale's sister, Miss Susan Hale; Mary Crafts and Helen Bigelow; my father and mother, Robert and I, and others whom I do not especially recall, were of the party. At the Spalding house, at the other end of the Plain, were Charles Dalton and his sister Julia. He was not then engaged—or if he was, it was not known—to Mary McGregor.

In the evening all were invited over from the other house, and the young people were eager to dance, but there was no musical instrument in the house, so Susan Hale volunteered to sit on the stairs and whistle the Lancers for them. I sat there behind her, and watched the show. The fun was fast and furious, and there was a song we sang so often during that visit that my memory retains it yet:

"A B Abraham Benjamin,
C D Caroline Dickinson,
E F Eleanor Falconer,
G H Gregory Henderson,
I J Ichabod Jefferson,
K L Kalendar Leopold,
M N Manuel Nickerson,
O P OLIVER PEABODY,
Q R Quarrelsome Rattlesnake,
S T Samuel Tuckerman,
U V Uriah Venniker,
W X William Xenophon,
Y Z YOUNG ZEKE."

Who was responsible for this conglomeration of names I do not remember. Some of the persons mentioned I knew, notably "O. P."; and "Young Zeke" always came out with a roar.

How Mrs. McGregor disposed of all her guests that night I do not know; but I do know I was one of six girls to sleep in a front chamber. And when we got round to it, I at any rate had a peaceful night. The next morning it rained, and all the visitors, singing the song, departed for the station in what we in New England called a "barge." The platform of the station was rather slippery from the rain, but nothing daunted the spirit of the guests and when it was proposed—if Miss Hale would kindly consent to furnish the music—to dance the Lancers while waiting for the train, they began. Mr. Hale, dancing across the platform,

lost his footing and fell on the track; Mr. Dalton, hastily following to pick him up, slipped in the same place and joined him below, but neither was hurt. And that is the last scene of the historic occasion that dwells in my memory.

Years passed before I was again invited to visit Amherst, but in the meantime I heard much of it. Naturally our friends in the ministry often came to visit us at Andover on the occasions of such theological festivities as came to pass from time to time. And thus it was that now and then came Mr. Davis and Cousin Abba to attend an anniversary when she and my father would invariably fall into a reminiscent vein and talk of Amherst. I listened with all my ears; for even then Amherst was not as other places to me. Once Mr. Davis brought not his wife but his daughter, and she was on entertainment bent. There is no doubt she entertained the younger generation of the family. And we listened with many shouts of laughter to her tales of Amherst. I was a young lady then, eighteen or nineteen years old, and felt immeasurably older than the young Rebecca, but I enjoyed her stories fully as much as any of the younger ones.

These occasions kept my interest in Amherst very much alive in these dry years; and a little later Rebecca and her cousin Mary Spalding came to Andover to school at Abbot Academy. They were quite sedate by that time, but still stories were told, and my knowledge of Amherst grew.

And at nearly the same time George Spalding came from Nashua, where he had been living with Cousin Edward, to Phillips Academy to prepare for college. It so happened that in their school days I became rather more intimate with George than with the girls. I was a good deal older than any of them; but George was naturally more free to come and see me than the members of a girls' school; and as he could only call on his cousins more or less formally at stated intervals, he acquired a habit of coming to see me. I had four brothers and was therefore used to more or less confidential relations with boys, and I think he regarded me somewhat as he would if I had been an elder sister. At any rate, when they all graduated from their respective schools in 1868, it was only George with whom I began a rather desultory correspondence; and so began a friendship which was to be lifelong. Such was the condition of affairs when a year later I was invited to make a much longer visit to the Amherst I already loved.

On a certain August evening in 1869 I was a passenger in the Amherst stage which carried the mail and such travelers as wished to be conveyed between the Railroad Station at Danforth's Corner, as it was then called, and the town, a distance of something over three miles. The car ride had been very hot and dusty, and as I stepped from the train the clean pungent smell of the country in the cool of the dusk was most refreshing. The stage was

full that night and it took some minutes to get the mail and pile on the luggage which gave me time to scrutinize my fellow passengers. Those of my own sex occupied the inside of the stage, while the men rode on top. Everything pertaining to this visit of mine which was just about to begin seemed of especial significance to me—a sense of entering into a story which stretched back into the past, but was still going on possessed me, and sharpened all my perceptions so that I still remember every detail of that ride—the sound of the men's voices floating down from overhead—the chatter of the women within concerning a picnic which was to take place on the following day from the hotel. These sounds were accompanied by a steady concert of "August Fifers" in the deepening dusk and the rumble of our ancient vehicle as we lumbered on. Perhaps a touch of human tragedy which was not wanting to this homely tale added vividness to my impressions. One of my fellow passengers I knew and when I saw her I felt sure that a sorrow which had been long impending had fallen at last. One pause we made at the intersection of the Nashua road where a woman sat waiting in a farm wagon in which she had driven down from the country behind, to meet one of the men. Mr. Clark, the stage driver, got down from his perch on the box to help the man with his trunk, take his fare and exchange a word or two with the pair before he climbed back and we proceeded on our way. We turned on to the Plain in front of the

house which had been the home of Robert Means. The hotel was just beyond and there we parted with the rest of my fellow passengers. Then the mail was left at the country store wherein was the Post Office, after which I was conveyed in solitary state over the Plain to the Spalding house.

When the stage drew up at the gate I had reached the end of my journey and the heart of my story. I can see as I write, some fifty years after that night, the great wide open front door, the light from the house streaming through it and Mr. Davis hurrying down the path to greet me, Cousin Abba standing in the doorway with welcoming arms outstretched and Rebecca coming down the stairs behind her. Hundreds of times since then have I arrived at that door, and never, save when sorrow drew me, without joy in my heart that I had come again. But that first time stands out in my memory as the pledge of all that were to come, one of the great first times of my life.

Certainly it is no trick of my imagination that assured me that the dear inmates of that house welcomed me, not as a casual guest, but as one who had come home. This first visit lasted about three weeks, and I rapidly became acquainted with the ways of the household and with the house itself. We walked and talked and drove and visited the neighbors. We cooked and attended to other household matters together. The Spalding cousins from Nashua would drive up now and then—Cousin

Edward, Cousin Dora, Mary and Dora—and we drove down to Nashua to see them. Never was guest made more welcome to home and heart than I. There was a peace about the old place which was not the peace of stagnation or of the passing moment. I hardly know how to describe it. It was not freedom from the strife of tongues; for Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis had frequent lively little duels about all sorts of things, which greatly added spice to the charm of their society because, I suppose, these little discussions were like the ruffling of the surface of the waters by a summer breeze and had nothing of a stormy nature.

As the days of my visit went on, I learned to know the house and its inmates with a pleasant intimacy. Rebecca shared her room with me and became mine own familiar friend in one of those blessed friendships that never stop growing. Mr. Davis took me to drive with him now and again when he went to see a distant parishioner, or was called on business to a neighboring town. It was on these occasions that I came to know and, in my degree, to understand my host, and to regard him with warm affection. Cousin Abba inspired me with a deep interest in my family history, pointing out to me in our drives the houses associated with it and telling me tales of those who had lived in them, besides discoursing on many other interesting themes concerning “books and work and healthful play.” It was as if I were in the midst of a story of absorbing interest; I was to hear

many of its chapters that were already finished, but the end was not yet, and my particular chapter was just beginning. Young as I was, I was thrilled by a sense of the Past, the Spirit of a Family that pervaded the old houses that Cousin Abba showed me, while she talked about Uncle Atherton, or Mary Ann, as if we were likely to meet them at the next turning.

Today I roll up to Amherst in a car, and if no one is in sight a horn is tooted to let my hostess know that I have come. The welcome is as warm as ever and the joy of being there is as great. But not so did I arrive in Amherst when I went to visit Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis. Imagine a winter afternoon falling into dusk, the earth white with snow, the air tingling with frost, the clear sky showing a tinge of green at the horizon. The bells of the old sleigh-stage jingled brightly as we drove into the village, and there I was at the old house once more, quite stiff with cold as I stumbled up the path, but my heart as warm as my body was cold; and little wonder I was happy with the knowledge of what awaited me within. First, there was the smell of the house more delicious than any smell I know, so clean and fresh, with a suggestion of wood fires and good cheer; then Cousin Abba standing at the parlor door with wide-open arms and her own look of loving welcome shining in her face. There was Mr. Davis just beyond, and the bright fire on the hearth, and the table set for supper. Then, my wraps removed, we

sat around the fire and talked as friends will talk of things new and old until Katie appeared with the supper, and we gathered about the table. When supper was over, and the keen appetite of the guest, which the cold drive from the station had quickened, amply satisfied with the delicious food, all evidences of the meal vanished as if by magic; the dishes were removed, the silver and glass washed and set in their appointed places in the closet, while the talk flowed on without interruption until Mandana brought in the evening mail, and there was the news to be discussed. As bedtime approached Cousin Abba prepared to perform a rite which for a long time filled me with no little alarm. She lighted a small kerosene lamp, took the fire-shovel and digging well under the burning logs drew out a shovelful of live coals. She gave them a little shake lest any should drop by the way, and taking the lamp in one hand and carrying the coals in the other, she mounted the stairs to her room and there set the fire alight in her soapstone stove.

After my first long visit at the Spalding house, I think I was always bidden to the feast whenever there was one. Indeed my second visit was to share their Thanksgiving celebration of 1869. Perhaps if I had known that I was to make the thirteenth at table, I might have refrained from going, not because I was superstitious myself, but out of consideration for any guest who might have been. However, a good many years passed—I should think at least ten—before one of the thirteen

died; and now, after fifty-two years, five of that company are still alive. I left Andover Thanksgiving morning at six-thirty, and arrived in Amherst about ten. It was a real old-fashioned New England festival. The long table was stretched diagonally across the winter parlor, and if tables ever groan with the weight of good things piled upon them, that table should have groaned. But there were no groans unless, indeed, some of the feasters inwardly groaned at the thirteen; if so, they were too well-bred to show their trouble. Everything that belonged to a Thanksgiving dinner of the first order was spread before us. I am not sure whether we had cider, which was the proper New England drink for such an occasion, but nothing was wanting to our enjoyment; and cider or no cider, no more temperate family ever was known in Amherst than the one which lived in the Spalding house.

It was a custom of long standing for Cousin Edward's family and Cousin Abba's to join for the Christmas and Thanksgiving feasts: at Nashua for Christmas, at the old Amherst homestead for Thanksgiving when one Frances Freeman, known as "Tark," an old negro servant of the Nashua family, was sometimes brought with them. After one such occasion her appreciation of the festivity burst forth into the following verse:

I used to think if I were asked
 Where best I'd like to stay
 Of all the places I have been
 I would say in Nashua.

For Nashua's a bunkum place
 Where everything is handy,
 But Sir I tell you what it is
 Old Amherst is the Dandy!
 Yankee Doodle Dandy!

Away from my friends in Nashua
 I never think of turning,
 But toward old Amherst Plains
 I pheel an awful yearning.
 About my friends on Amherst Plains
 I seem to talk a sight,
 But Sir if you should see them once
 You'd say that I was right.
 Of many friends in Nashua
 I would say nothing ill
 But Sir I have an aching void
 Which Amherst friends most fill.
 And well they know how to fill that void
 So filled it long will stay
 And Sir you better believe they did
 On last Thanksgiving Day.
 When Amherst friends shall all have gone
 To Canaans happy land,
 Oft will I get me to the plains
 Whereon their mansion stands.

When the visage grim shall come to bind
Me in his icy chains,
Eer I yield I'll shout farewell
To good old Amherst Plains.

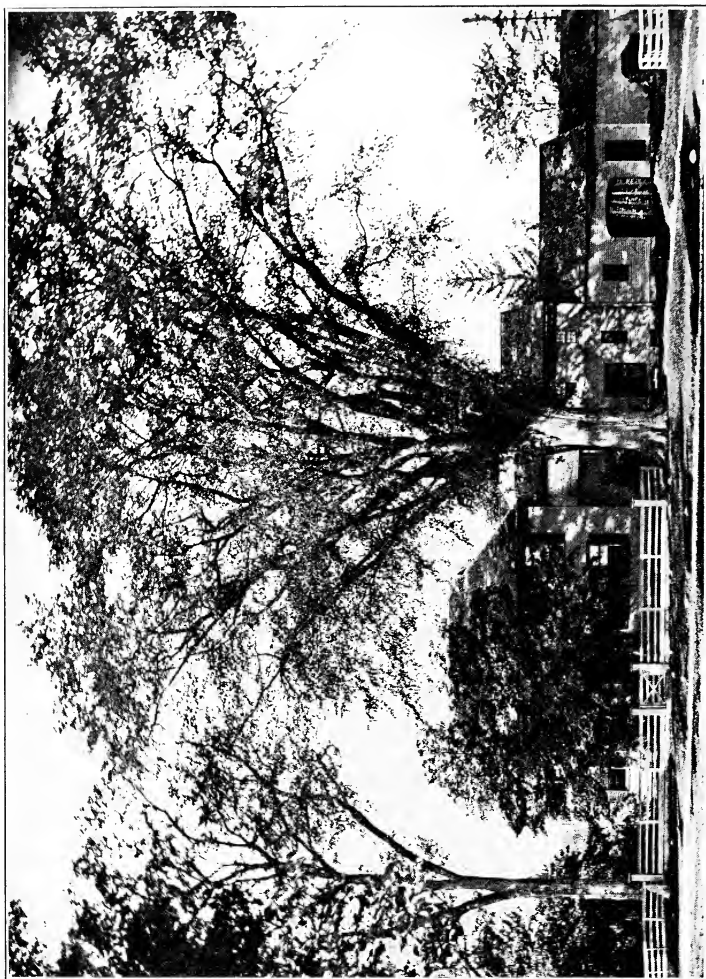
I have spoken of learning to know the Amherst house as if it were a person, and so indeed it seemed to me. The value and charm of a house chiefly depend upon the lives lived within its walls. Mr. Algernon Blackwood has often described in his stories how the evil that men and women do lives after them in the dwelling places of their earthly habitation. We have, in fact, all known of houses that bore an evil reputation because of the wickedness there conceived and executed in the past by their inmates. If this is true, so much more should the house whose dwellers have for many years lived lives consecrated to God and the service of their fellows radiate a peace and good will that makes for happiness to those who come within its good influence. So I feel about the house in Amherst. As I think of those who have lived in it since the time Doctor Spalding brought his young wife and baby there, down to the present day when his granddaughter and her daughter faithfully carry on the traditions of the place, I see how that house of good will has ever been true to its heritage.

The place as it is now has been in the Spalding family for one hundred and eleven years and the house has never been closed in all that time. I

know not where Doctor Spalding and his wife made their first home in the town, but they removed to this one early in 1810. Previous to that time a certain Judge Dana had bought an old house on this site and desiring a more stately mansion he joined to it a new one with a higher stud. He evidently raised the roof of the old house and by a clever arrangement of the windows made the old and new parts present a symmetrical front to the Plain, while on the garden front the windows are left at different levels.

When you enter the great front door you find yourself in a hall which runs straight through the house to the garden door, from there Judge Dana or his successor "planted a garden" westward "in Eden," and there is the old garden today, having lost none of its loveliness—thanks to the great-granddaughter of its original mistress. The family, like other families of distinction, had two residences, removing in the spring from the front room on the right of the front door to the garden room in the rear of the newer half of the house, and back again in the fall.

Another charm of the summer parlor was its contiguity to that room of delightful mystery, the middle kitchen. As the guest of to-day sits in the dining room and partakes of the good things set before him, he could hardly imagine the "middle kitchen" from which this charming room has been evolved. Not that the old lacked charm, far otherwise, but it was of quite another kind. In



THE SPALDING HOUSE



those days the room was guiltless of paint, the pine boards were brown with age but of spotless cleanliness. There Mr. Davis had a table whereon he prepared his pickles, kept his seeds and other garden truck; there was the meal chest; there was a great fireplace, never used in those days, with a brick oven attached. Over this hung from the ceiling the ears of seed corn. There was a cabinet filled with various kinds of spices and delicious odors. There, years later while it was still the middle kitchen, stood the doll house of Honora and Mary Seaton before the big fireplace. The room on the left of the front door was Mr. Davis's study and was sacred to his uses. Here he wrote his sermons, and fought his battles and won his victories of the Spirit. The other rooms were in the fullest sense living rooms.

Today Mrs. Spalding has eliminated the soapstone stoves and opened fireplaces in every room. This does beautifully in a summer residence, but when the house was lived in all the year round, it was necessary to have some more effective method of warming the rooms and soapstone stoves admirably answered this purpose, giving out a soft and even warmth. There was no furnace in the house and no coal was ever used until years later when a new kitchen stove required it. All heating was done by wood. In those early days of which I write there was, through the little entry, a passage from the kitchen to the winter parlor. In this passage was a large wood box to feed the

parlor fire, and it was the custom for any member of the household coming through that passage to bring along a stick of wood. If the fire did not need the wood, the stick was placed on the top of the Franklin stove until it was required.

As my mind recalls the charm of those early days, I hesitate to touch them lest I should destroy the vision which is so dear. But for this cause I am writing this chronicle: for in this house and through its inmates has been recreated the Amherst that I wish you who read to know. The exquisite order, the fine simplicity of their daily life so impressed itself on at least one visitor that she longed to go home and try to reproduce it in her own family, but a short consideration of the constituent elements of the two families showed her the absurdity of any such dream! A large family is the germ of a true democracy where all are equal before the law, where even-handed justice—ah yes, and even-handed love and understanding are meted out to its members as occasion requires, but democracies are ever somewhat turbulent and not amenable to such rules as may govern smaller communities. If indeed "order is Heaven's first law" the household in Amherst was, as often seemed to me, a part of Heaven! To come downstairs on a frosty winter's morning and find on opening the door of the winter parlor the breakfast table set with its shining morning face, inviting even the daintiest appetite to partake of its good cheer; the sun streaming in the window and the fire in the open

Franklin stove burning cheerfully, was to feel in everything the welcome of a new day, which was different from all the days which had gone before, an exhilaration felt but never understood, and which was never the same when the family had moved into their summer residence on the garden side of the house. That also had its peculiar charm. There it was the garden that drew you, the garden where Mr. Davis worked and Cousin Abba's spirit presided, as it did indeed over the whole place. I used to think that she imparted something of herself to every flower that bloomed there and that the flowers must love her as she certainly loved them.

CHAPTER XII

COUSIN ABBA AND MR. DAVIS

Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis: I cannot write the two names without a deep feeling of affection and gratitude. For many years they meant to me all I knew and loved of Amherst. In their home and hearts I ever found a loving welcome. From their wisdom and experience I drew much that has helped me to live. If it were possible, I would like to set them forth to the present generation of the family as they really were, for they were unique.

Cousin Abba was born but a few months before her parents moved into the Spalding house, and consequently in all the ninety years of her life she never knew any other dwelling place. Of her childhood and youth you will find some record in the letters of her generation. Here in Amherst she was one of that company of cousins: the Athertons, the children of David and Catharine Means, the visiting cousins from Chester, the Kents, the Appletons, the Spaldings from Nashua. But at the time I am describing now, the only descendants, either Means or Atherton, living in Amherst were Cousin Abba and her daughter Rebecca, and George Kent and his daughter Annie, who lived in the house built by Robert Means at the other end of the Plain.

Cousin Abba until her death was the presiding spirit of the old house as I knew it, and I shall be glad if I can make her known to my readers. Many of you did know her, but so fast the years fly by that to most of you she is but a name. Picture to yourself then the lady in the garden whose picture is in the front of the book. She must have been sixty years of age when I made my first visit to Amherst in 1869. She was small of stature but her qualities of mind and character were such as made her easily the leading lady of the town. This was partly because she was the wife of the minister but far more because of her eminent fitness for the position. She would have been a leading lady anywhere. She delighted in the society of her friends and her welcome and hospitality were truly charming. She had a clear and just intellect. I once heard a man who was a scholar and a capable judge of such matters say that of all the women he had known she had the rarest quality of mind, that it gave forth a tone like a silver bell for clearness and was capable of grasping the most intricate problems in metaphysics. I can testify that she had also a warm and tender heart and loved faithfully and truly those upon whom she bestowed her affection. She was always deliberate in her judgment and I think seldom answered hastily; she had always an air of reflection as if she wished to weigh the matter in all its bearings. I once asked her what kind of a woman Mrs. M. was (a lady who had recently come to live in the town). There

was the usual pause and look of consideration before she answered, somewhat to my surprise: "She sits down very well, my dear." I need not say with what interest, the next Sunday, I watched the lady as she came into church and seated herself in her pew. Cousin Abba was right. She sat down with a becoming dignity, I may say a firmness, which indicated that she would remain seated quietly as long as there was any occasion for her to do so.

I used to think when I first knew Cousin Abba that her somewhat indeterminate manner of speech meant that she had not fully made up her mind, but never was anyone more mistaken. When, for instance, she would say, in a rather tentative fashion, that perhaps it would be well for Rebecca to make a call that afternoon on some distant parishioner, I would suppose that the choice was given to Rebecca. But I soon learned that Cousin Abba's way of putting the matter was equivalent to a request, which was always obeyed.

She had little sense of the value of time, and when they were going anywhere Mr. Davis, who was promptness itself, would be ready, the horse harnessed and waiting, but no Cousin Abba. In vain her husband would call to her impatiently: "My dear, we shall be late. We have no time to lose." When she was ready, she came but not before. And as far as I know they never did arrive too late for any occasion.

Amherst was Mr. Davis's first and only parish;

there he preached and lived the Gospel of his Master. He was somewhat short of stature, with the beautiful head of a scholar and a thinker. He was a man of strong personality, with a certain brusqueness of speech that sometimes caused his parishioners and friends to misunderstand him. But this was mainly the armor worn to hide an unusually sensitive and tender heart; and to know him well was to know one of the kindest natured and most generous of men. Whatever good thing he had he shared. He hardly ever went across the Plain without carrying some gift of fresh vegetables or fruit or flowers in their season from his garden to someone less fortunate than himself. When he had occasion to take long drives for pleasure or business and had a vacant seat to offer anyone to whom such a jaunt would be a pleasure, he was sure to remember them. He was ready to administer to the sick, the suffering and the troubled such comfort and counsel as he saw they needed, and to ease the burdens of those within his ken, if he saw a way to do it, was but the natural expression of his good will. One could tell by his prayers that he lived close to God, and loved his neighbor as himself. He was a lover of nature and his comments on aspects of earth or sky, as we rode over the country, showed how closely he was observing them. At my Medford school the pupils were required to learn some poetry every day, and one verse of a poem by Francis

Quarles that has lingered in my memory always makes me think of Mr. Davis:

"I love, and have some cause to love, the Earth.
She is my Maker's creature, therefore good.
She is my mother, for she gave me birth.
She is my tender nurse; she gives me food.
But what's my mother or my nurse to me,
Or what's the earth, O Lord, compared to Thee?"

Mr. Davis had an almost morbid dread of exaggeration; and he was so averse to talking about himself that when any occasion arose which required him to speak of his own experiences he made the story so bald as to be almost exasperating. For instance, he was on the ill-fated *Narragansett*, a Sound steamer, when it sank, with great loss of life, on a trip between New York and Fall River. One would think that here was an occasion for a most interesting narrative of personal experience; but no, anything more than a bare recital of facts could not be obtained save by rigid questioning. After doing what he could in his very quiet way to help more helpless folk, he had put on a life preserver and committed himself to the waves; and after being in the water about half an hour was rescued by one of the boats. Not that he spoke of helping anyone! I incidentally unearthed that fact by inference. One personal remark from this most abstemious of men was amusing: "Coffee however hot does not quicken

your circulation in such a case; you need a mouthful of brandy or spirit of some kind."

This leads me to speak of his views on prohibition. He was opposed to it although at his table nothing in the way of wine was ever served, and in all the years of my intimate knowledge of him I never saw him touch wine or spirits of any kind as a beverage, but he stoutly maintained his right to do so if he wished. No man, I think, could be more temperate than he; but he strenuously opposed the substitution of the unfermented juice of the grape for wine at the Communion Service and as long as he was minister of the parish his views prevailed. But when his successor came, that element in the Church which was opposed to the use of wine on every and all occasions voted for the substitution. The manner in which the vote was obtained seemed to those members of the Church, who saw the question as Mr. Davis did, to be unfair and savoring of political methods and there is no doubt that both he and Cousin Abba were deeply hurt. It was more to them than a question of expediency; it changed the whole Sacrament in its deepest meaning. The Lord had used wine as a symbol of His Blood at the Last Supper and what He had done was sacred forevermore. It was a vital thing with them, and neither of them ever partook of the substitute thereafter. Mr. Davis would take the cup in his hand for a moment, and then return it to the ministering dea-

con, while Cousin Abba would lift it to her lips but never taste it.

He was a man of positive convictions and that he spoke those convictions sometimes out of season, as well as in season, occasionally led his friends to smile, and his enemies wilfully to misunderstand and misrepresent him. He was a most faithful lover of truth and it sometimes seemed to me that in his eagerness to speak it at all times and to speak it without any softening touches made his words sound harsh, when there was true kindness in his heart. He certainly never used soft words with any hope that they would butter the proverbial parsnip; and when out of the kindness and affection of his true heart he was moved to express to one who enjoyed his friendship some word of special affection and sympathy, he held it back until he could provide himself with a safe line of retreat from any acknowledgment in kind.

Mr. Davis and my father were warm friends though, as they were both men of positive character, they did not always agree in minor matters. I remember one very snowy morning, when we were living in Andover, Mr. Davis blew in with the storm on his way to visiting Rebecca who was then at Abbot Academy. He stayed to dinner and shortly after my father, who had been in New York, arrived home. My mother superintended his dinner, and then he came into the sitting room intent on a cigar. He courteously offered the box to Mr. Davis, who instantly declined. "No thank

you," said he. "I don't smoke, and I don't advise my friends to." My father selected a cigar for himself, remarking pleasantly as he did so: "Then I suppose your friends smoke without your advice." Lighting the offending weed, he established himself to enjoy his guest's society, and they discoursed in friendly fashion until Mr. Davis set forth to breast the drifts between our house and the school.

Mr. Davis liked a good horse and always drove one. When I first went to Amherst he had a horse called Dandy. As became his name he was a gay and stylish animal with some airs and graces calculated to deceive the unsophisticated with the impression that he was about to smash all records. He was an excellent traveler however and never did anyone any harm. Many years later when Dandy was growing old, Mr. Davis bought a bay mare called Roxy. Unlike Dandy, Roxy had no style and no airs and graces. To see her tied under the big elm awaiting the company she was to carry, you might indeed think that her name became her as Dandy's did him; but when she warmed to her work she was the pleasantest, if not the fastest, on a long stretch that I ever rode behind. She went as if her joints were greased, so easy was her long steady gait, and she always came home from the longest drive as fresh as when she went out. She had only one fault that I know and that was that when her head was turned toward home she could not be made to stand still. The only

course was to turn her round. George Spalding, when he came, undertook to train her and drove her across the Plain, turned her towards home and made her stop at every house on the way back. He succeeded, but no one else could. Cousin Abba also loved a good horse, but her affections were much more set on Dandy than on Roxy; and when Dandy grew so old that it was merciful to put him out of his suffering it was a small tragedy in the house.

Many charming excursions and long drives we enjoyed with both horses. I remember one in particular, while they were both in the best condition. Aunt Helen and Uncle Daniel Noyes, in taking one of their little journeys through the country, had stopped to visit their friends in Amherst. Their horse, Tom, was one of those powerful creatures with a perfectly stubborn determination to go his own pace, which was ordinarily heavy and slow. While there, we planned a picnic in their honor to the Uncanoonucs. There were three carriages. Rebecca and I were in the first, driving Dandy; Mr. Davis and Aunt Helen were in the last and were driving Roxy; and in the middle one, the Noyes's wide buggy drawn by Tom, were Mr. Noyes, Cousin Abba and Mrs. Remwick, a friend. Tom, becoming excited by the other horses, tried to tear along the road, and I shall never forget the picture I saw on looking back as I heard him thundering along behind—Mr. Noyes on his knees holding the reins

as for dear life while the two ladies behind him laughed merrily at his efforts to restrain his steed.

Mr. Davis was a scholar and all his life a student. His unusual ability and character were fully recognized by his peers, and although a graduate of Yale he was for many years one of the most honored and useful Trustees of Dartmouth College. No one who heard him preach could forget his simple dignity and his deep sense of the sacredness of his calling. His sermons were full of wisdom; and the deep experiences of his spiritual life found in them the only expression in words which for a man of his temperament was possible. Mr. Davis resigned his pastorate in 1879 and the church called a young man, the Reverend W. D. Leland, to succeed him. He was just out of the Seminary, and he did not remain in Amherst long. He was followed by the Reverend A. J. McGown, a man who filled the position with faithfulness and tact.

Few of those who are married live to celebrate their fiftieth anniversary. Uncle and Aunt Spalding did, as has been recorded, but Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis were wise in choosing to make a festival of their fortieth anniversary in September, 1888. Not a very large party assembled in the old house—a very dear friend of many years' standing, Mrs. Blanchard, and I were the house guests—other friends and neighbors were there; there were flowers and letters of congratulation and affection; and the bride and bridegroom of forty years were

well and happy and rejoicing in the tokens of love and friendship which came to them from their many friends.

In the spring of 1904, during the pastorate of Mr. McGown, Mr. Davis died at the age of seventy-nine. My father, at nearly the same age, had died in the early days of that year: both had suffered from somewhat long and distressing illness. When one reflects on the life of a dear friend, after he has been taken from our sight, it often seems as if like the wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, the Lord had kept the best until the last. For there seems poured into our lives a new and deeper appreciation of him who has gone than would have been possible when he was living here with us, and the small events and irritations of everyday life so held our eyes that we could not see save with dimmed vision how full his life was of the Spirit of his Master.

LETTERS

Mr. Davis to A. M. M., 1886.

My dear Friend,

Your timely gift to the library reached me more than two weeks ago, and I hoped to present it with "word of destiny" to the trustees before this for a formal acknowledgement, but I have been away—others sick and absent. Hence no meeting and your gift in apparent neglect. [Mr. Davis and Annie

Carruth were instrumental in bringing about the building of the library for which my brother drew the plans.] The book however has interested and profited me and my wife and *Katie*. The last has read one sermon and said it was good. I can say the Sermons are remarkable for their simplicity and strength and thoroughly Evangelical spirit. The author evidently is more intent on speaking the truth with clearness and force than anything else and yet they have Historical beauty of a high order. I am happy to place them in the Town Library as your gift.

The fire set is on the hearth at present and in service filling the demand.

We have pleasant remembrances of our late journey, both of places and persons, but none more pleasant than the greeting of Anne Means in Washington Street.

Since Deacon Boylston took Mr. Dodge and Fanny into his own pew after the marriage he had declaimed against for five years, we infer that he approves, and the town has ceased talking. This is gossip, so I will stop.

With kindest regards to your dear kindred, I am as ever your friend

J. G. DAVIS.

AMHERST, N. H. Oct. 21, 1888.

My dear Anne:

We hear from Boston that you are not in your

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usual health and to put the matter in a word, in need of rest. Abba has had in mind to write you, but engrossing occupations have hindered. So I take the pen to ask you to come to us immediately, we are now in the front parlor and ready to receive friends, especially the friend, who has so often come to us with helpful hands, and a precious companionship. Would not a week of Amherst air prove the tonic you need? We think we can do you good, give us the opportunity if possible.

Yours affectionately,

J. G. DAVIS.

Do come. A. A. D.

Cousin Abba to A. M. M.

[Birthday letter—80 years]

AMHERST, Dec. 3, '89.

My dear Anne,

If your handwriting had not the sweetness of "Flowers in May"—it had one of its own which is even better. Last week I did not even write Rebecca until Friday.

It was not a large company I was preparing for, but I was anxious to have everything possible in readiness before the day came as I could not have much help outside the kitchen then. The four friends from N. came disregarding the storm. Mrs. Kent & Lu were driven over—but counting in Mr. Davis and myself we were only 8. Others we would

gladly have called to our board were too far away or held by superior claims. I sometimes think a storm is rather enlivening on such an occasion. Those who venture out in it feel it should be worth something & that helps to make it so. All the party were in health to enjoy the dinner & so aimable as to praise it. Mary stayed over until Saturday—it is needless to say to our great pleasure & making amends, in part, for absence last year.

I hope the festival day went well with your grandly large family gathering, that your father had escaped from the dentist—that little Robin could fill his place well. I hope, too, that continued better nights for dear Aunt Helen gave gladness to all hearts.

Do you know, dear, that it is the first day of my eightieth year? It seems almost incredible that I have lived so long—but dates, as well as facts, are stubborn things! I am wondering if I shall begin to feel proud of being so old. To speak soberly—there are a great variety of thoughts and feelings come with looking over the events of such a tide of years. Surely I must say, mercy & goodness have followed me all my days.

A loving, delightful letter came from R. this morn & some remembrances for the day are on the way. R. & G. send me a teapot she says, the children a box of sugar plums & Ida a new butter plate. Come & see them.

Cannot Mary come to see us before going to N. Y.? I have not forgotten the little talk we had

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about when I was sitting in your Mother's room. And we do want her to come very much. True, the country is bare, & the sunshine rare—but we will smile so much to have her with us that she may possibly not miss the sunshine.

Mr. Davis to A. M. M.

Tuesday A. M.

Before breakfast.

My dear Anne:

It rains and this farmer will not send hay to Nashua this day. It is dark, so I write by the window which is not promising for my chirography. My wife, generous woman, has written a pretty full history of our times since you left us. Last Friday we drove to Nashua dining with Mary and Dora, having a pleasant visit and getting home at 5 P. M. The day was hot and both of us were somewhat languid in consequence. She did not go to church on Sunday, but we had a good audience and Sunday School was well attended. Lu's class of young men is remarkable, some 16 or 17 and most of them decidedly thoughtful. Several were in the class in Rebecca's time. The interest is genuine, I think, but our people are not demonstrative. I mean the best part of them.

We have read Donald's article with cordial sentiments of approval for the real drift of the

article. The subject is of supreme importance and I hope we shall witness a reformation in our ways. The cause of goodness and piety is being lost in societies and mechanism. Soon the charm of individuality will disappear and we shall all be alike yet not alike.

If I stop right here and now this letter may reach you today, so I send my cordial regards to your Father and Mother and Mary. With sincere affection

Your friend and cousin

J. G. DAVIS.

Cousin Abba to A. M. M.

[Birthday letter—86 years]

AMHERST, Dec. 6, 1895

My dear Anne,

I count your affectionate, kindest of letters as one of the precious gifts of my eighty-sixth birthday. It is very sweet and pleasant dear to be thus feted by dear friends on an occasion that brings many sober thoughts, although I have not yet been left to say I have no pleasure in them. I still feel that Solomon was a wise man and that age cannot be youth, it is richer in some ways,—in seeing how entire is our dependence on God, how wonderful is His goodness and patience toward us when we look at ourselves,—all natural beauty also from the heavens to the meanest flower that blooms is more

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interesting to me as I grow older, it shows the same Infinite sower as that which said at the beginning "Let there be light and there was light."

Saturday Morning.

Thus far last night, dear Anne, when Mrs. Parker returned from the reception to Mr. and Mrs. McGown. It seems to have been very successful, a full company of people living in the village. Dea. Wilkins, driven down by Fred Sawyer, the Philbrecks, both Parkers from pond way and others who must have taken some trouble to get there. I think it must have been very gratifying to Mr. and Mrs. McG. The menu consisted of coffee and tea and delicate crackers—Bessie pouring coffee at one table and Emma C. pouring tea at another. Now Lu has been in and tells very much the same story, naming two notable exceptions of village people Mrs. A. and K. R.

I make no excuse, my dear A., for the topic of these last pages, knowing well your interest in all that concerns Amherst. And you must not forget your promise to come to me soon after you leave N. Y. Love to R. and all the dear house, adding a full share for yourself from the heart of your cousin

A. A. D.

The Gurneys came in good shape and are good and will be good for me.

Cousin Abba to A. M. M.

AMHERST, Dec. 24th, 1897

My dear Anne:

The box of roses and carnations came safely this morning. They fill the air with fragrance and delight the eye with beauty and are an added proof of your thoughtfulness and love shown to me so long and which has brightened and cheered my life for many years. The Lord bless you dear, and preserve you to be a strength, counsellor and friend to many. God has placed you in a large family circle, besides dear ones outside of it, by whom you are so much loved and valued.

The plan for the trip to Europe seems quite an ideal one, but it looks as if some who are left behind would feel rather lonely, but when we have you all safely back we will rejoice.

Did that handsome, magnificent vase, which required that large box to bring it, come from you dear? I cannot think of any one beside. It is now filled with laurel and looks stately and elegant.

Lovingly yours,

A. A. D.

Cousin Abba to A. M. M.

[Birthday letter—89 years]

AMHERST, Dec. 8, 1898.

My dear Anne:

Mr. McGown in his birthday call on Saturday

said in his congratulations I wish you might live eighty-nine years longer. Then, as if I might think it rather an extravagance, added "Perhaps you would not care to." But in the evening, night before last, when Clark left the box, saying "paid through" and when the full and varied contents were displayed before me I almost said to myself—does Anne think I am to live eighty-nine years more? Then yesterday when that dear, loving letter came, I said to myself—"Oh, yes, the love that sent them, that is better than all." But these generous, thoughtful proofs of it, have a great value also, especially to one of my disabilities. You seem to have made it a study, dear Anne, to send every article I might need for strength or nourishment and I assure my loved cousin and friend I shall not enjoy them without very tender thoughts of the love that sent them.

It is pleasant to know dear cousin Ellis is with you. My love is with her in full measure and I am very glad to hear she is comfortably well. It is about the report I can make myself, but weather and travelling are both against my going out.

Is not there something rather absurd in Smith College girls sending out a protest against imperialism? I almost feel like protesting on the other side.

It must be pleasant to see a little of Mac. and Laura in Boston. I feared you would all be exhausted by that anxious watch over the cook and thought it might be a serious drawback to dear

Mary. My love to her and might not a trip to Amherst do her good by and by? Lovingly and gratefully yours, dear Anne

A. A. D.

CHAPTER XIII

REBECCA'S MARRIAGE

From the time of my first visit to Cousin Abba, we were often enlivened by the visits of George Spalding, the eldest son of Doctor Alfred of Kentucky, whose home through his school and college days as I have said elsewhere was with his Uncle Edward at Nashua. George was a handsome young fellow, with jet black hair and dark eyes and skin, which he must have inherited from the Seaton side of the family as the Spaldings were of the Saxon type, fair and blue-eyed. During his vacations he often found occasion to come to Amherst, and it was not very long before I perceived the special attraction that drew him thither. When his cousins Rebecca Davis and Mary Spalding were at Abbot Academy and he at Phillips, the intimate friendship was begun between the three and myself that has but grown stronger with the years. Mary and Rebecca are still among my best loved friends and so, I may say, is George though he has passed out of sight. He was the first of the cousins to become my intimate friend, and it was to that fact and not to any confidence bestowed that I first came to suspect that his cousin Rebecca held a unique place in his affections. Time confirmed the suspicion, though it was long before I had any definite knowledge on the subject. After an

engagement of several years, they were married on September 4, 1878.

I went up to Amherst some weeks before the marriage to do what I could to help along, but chiefly to be with Rebecca Davis until she changed her name and state. Mary Spalding, who had been visiting there before me, was one day summoned to a private interview with an old lady—the same who thought it her duty to interfere in the affairs of Mary Appleton years before by telling tales of the man to whom she was engaged. She wanted, she said, to consult Mary about what she should give Rebecca for a wedding present. She had only two things of sufficient value for such an occasion: one was a cashmere shawl, and the other was a set of jewelry, old-fashioned, but handsome and valuable. I think Mary, on consideration, decided in favor of the jewelry, which had possibilities; and Mrs. S. expressed herself as satisfied and decided by Mary's advice. The gift had not arrived when I went to Amherst, but I was told the story and we awaited its coming with some curiosity. But time went on, and no present arrived from Mrs. S. At last one evening as we sat at tea, a step was heard in the hall coming from the front door, and we rather expected Annie Kent to appear; but before the person arrived at the dining room, the sound of her steps turned the other way and evidently retreated by the front door. When the mystery was investigated, a paper parcel was found on the hall table "From Mrs. S." The soft

nature of the package made it certain it was not the jewelry, but it might be the shawl! On investigation it was found to be two linen chemises of what was called Fayal work. She was certainly a queer old woman.

One day a letter came to Rebecca from Doctor William Clark, which seems fit to be preserved among the archives of the family in Amherst, so I here transcribe it:

AMHERST, Aug. 25th, 1878.

My dear Rebecca,

The common report, probably true, is that you are soon to be married and to leave us for a home in New York. While I congratulate you on the prospect of an honorable, happy, connubial connection, I must express my deep regret that myself and sisters, our church, villagers, and the Amherst community generally, are to be deprived of your presence.

Your daily walks through our village diffusing unconsciously to yourself light and joy along your steps—our Sabbath congregations in the Sanctuary—Our religious conferences in the Chapel, as well as our Sabbath School not much longer to be favored with your present efficient aid—the benevolent associations of our good ladies to be deprived of your counsels and aid and our village and district schools no longer to enjoy the benefits of your visits and examinations—Our young people

to be deprived of your cheerful, improving, elevating companionship—all these considerations cast and will cast a social, religious sadness over our village and community generally.

But we will be comforted in our deprivation of your presence by the prospect of your increased happiness and usefulness in the new endearing relation into which you expect soon to enter. In that relation may your life be long continued very happy and very useful.

As some little expression of my high respect for and large interest in you from your childhood please accept the enclosed.

With high esteem and strong affection,

Very truly yours,

WM. CLARK.

Rebecca was married in the church of which her father was pastor, and thereby hangs a tale. For sometime we had been aware of rumors that certain persons in the town who cherished ill will towards Mr. Davis intended to make trouble because of a State law forbidding the marriage of first cousins. I well remember on the Sunday before the wedding the family discussion that took place at the Kents' house during the noon hour between the services in regard to the tales of threats by both the Deacon and Miss L. to interrupt the ceremony that was to take place on the following Wednesday. Mr. Davis had consulted the best lawyers who assured him that the law had

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been pushed through the Legislature by a man who hoped thereby to prevent his daughter's marriage, and that it was defective as no penalty was attached and no declaration that such a marriage was illegal. Nevertheless, as both Mr. Davis and his prospective son-in-law were sticklers for the law and wished to neglect no means to render the marriage unassailable, it was arranged that the bridal couple, during an unavoidable wait at a railway junction in Massachusetts, where there was no such law, should go through the marriage ceremony again before a justice of the peace and by him be pronounced man and wife.

This state of affairs greatly added to the excitement of the occasion; and Rebecca and I, spending the day before in active preparations for the wedding feast, discussed the possibility of an interruption of the ceremony, as in *Jane Eyre*, a favorite novel of ours in those days.

We had earnestly hoped and prayed for sunshine, but it was not to be. The morning was gray and lowering, and soon the rain came in a steady down-pour that forbade the hope of fair weather. The stage brought the friends and relations from a distance, the Spaldings came from Nashua—but down came the rain. All was going well in the kitchen; Cousin Abba, arrayed for the occasion, was making herself agreeable in her most charming way to the guests who evidently had come for a good time, and meant to have it. There was no *Ancient Mariner* to hold any wedding guest. We

got the bride dressed, and very sweet and charming she looked. Then I went to call George who, very white, was not looking much like an expectant bridegroom, and evidently was suffering from his familiar malady, a "sick headache," which was sure to attack him whenever events of great importance came into his life. However, he braced up, and as we all started for the church, we were cheered by the rain's stopping although it did not clear. Annie Kent had attended to dressing the church with clematis and ferns, and it was, of course, crowded as every one in town, whether friend or foe, was deeply interested in the marriage. Rebecca, taking her father's arm, was escorted up the aisle and delivered over to George, while her father stepped before them and opened the Prayer Book and began the service. At last came the question: "If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak or else hereafter for ever hold his peace." I have never heard the words more solemnly spoken; and then there was a pause quite long enough for the witnesses to feel a little nervous and for any objector to speak. But no sound broke the profound silence, and the ceremony proceeded without hindrance.

Cousin Abba, always her delightful self when surrounded by friends, was a charming hostess, and perhaps partly owing to relief from the strain of expecting the dramatic interruption at the church, the guests were particularly lively, and

although it began to rain again nothing could mar the happiness of the company. The newly married pair, amid a shower of rice and old shoes, soon left for the afternoon train; and the little legal ceremony to which I have alluded was performed, while they were waiting for a train to Lake George, by a justice of the peace at Groton Junction.

Then settled down on the old house from which the bride had departed the flatness that ever follows after such an occasion. Emily Means, Mary Spalding, Augusta Gillette and I did our best to bridge over that trying time, and we were not successful. I had intended to remain with Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis for a little visit, but news of the death of my mother's brother called me home. Mr. Davis bespoke my passage in the afternoon stage on the day after the wedding, but Rodney Clark, the driver, failed to note the summons, and therefore had to harness up and take me down alone. As we drove along Mr. Clark observed: "It was awful hard on Mr. and Mrs. Davis to lose Rebecca—just about as hard as if they were burying her." "Oh, no," was my quick response, "for they know where she is, you see!" Then, consumed with silent laughter over the absurdity of my remark, I could say nothing further.

At the time of the marriage George was established in New York as a young physician with a growing practice; and though his practice grew pretty steadily and his income proportionately, as is usual with young people who have their way to

make, there were times of stress and anxiety before them. They never let Amherst slip. Rebecca always came home in summer, and, after her children were born made as long a season there as she could, while George came for such vacations as he could snatch from an exacting practice.

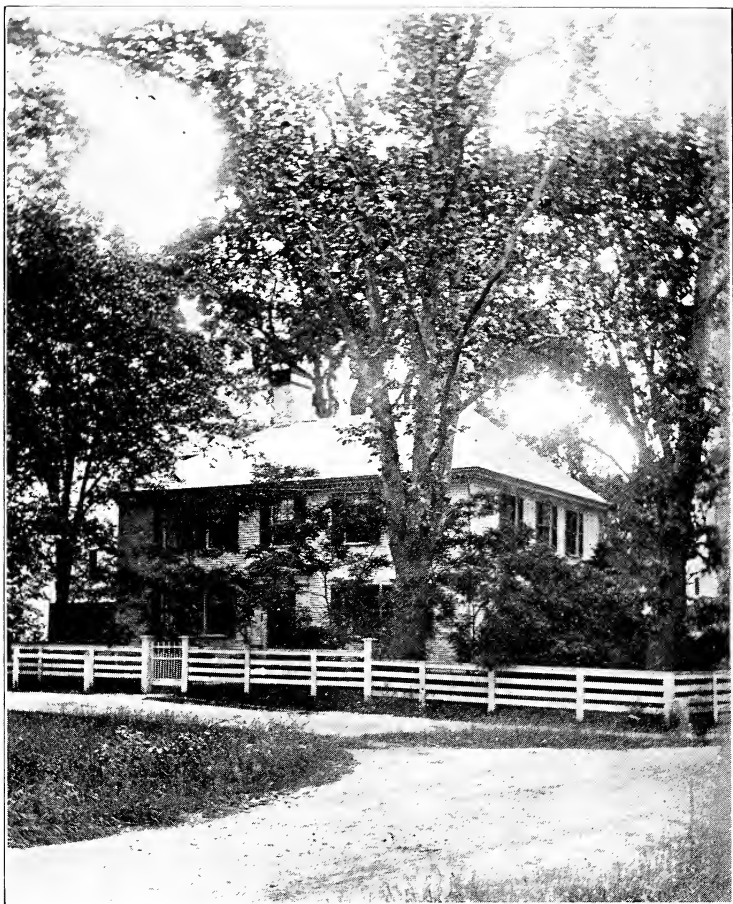
In later years I had great opportunity to judge of George as a physician from the way in which he helped me when mortal sickness and death came into my home. His point of view was always what *I* could do to help and comfort them in the days and weeks before they were taken from me. He never tried to comfort anyone by holding out false hopes. I can never forget how heartening it was to have him show you as clearly as he did what you could do by setting aside your own suffering and fixing your mind on helping the one appointed to die. He was a true physician of the soul as well as the body: that he never deceived you was the source of your faith in him and of the strength he gave you to act well your part.

George was mine own familiar friend from the time he was a school boy at Andover until his death in 1906; and when he married Rebecca that event, instead of loosening the bonds of our friendship, seemed but to draw them closer. In the beginning she was the nearer and dearer; but as time went on and I was much with them, it became one tie which bound me to both. As they were most truly one, so in my friendship for them they became one friend instead of two.

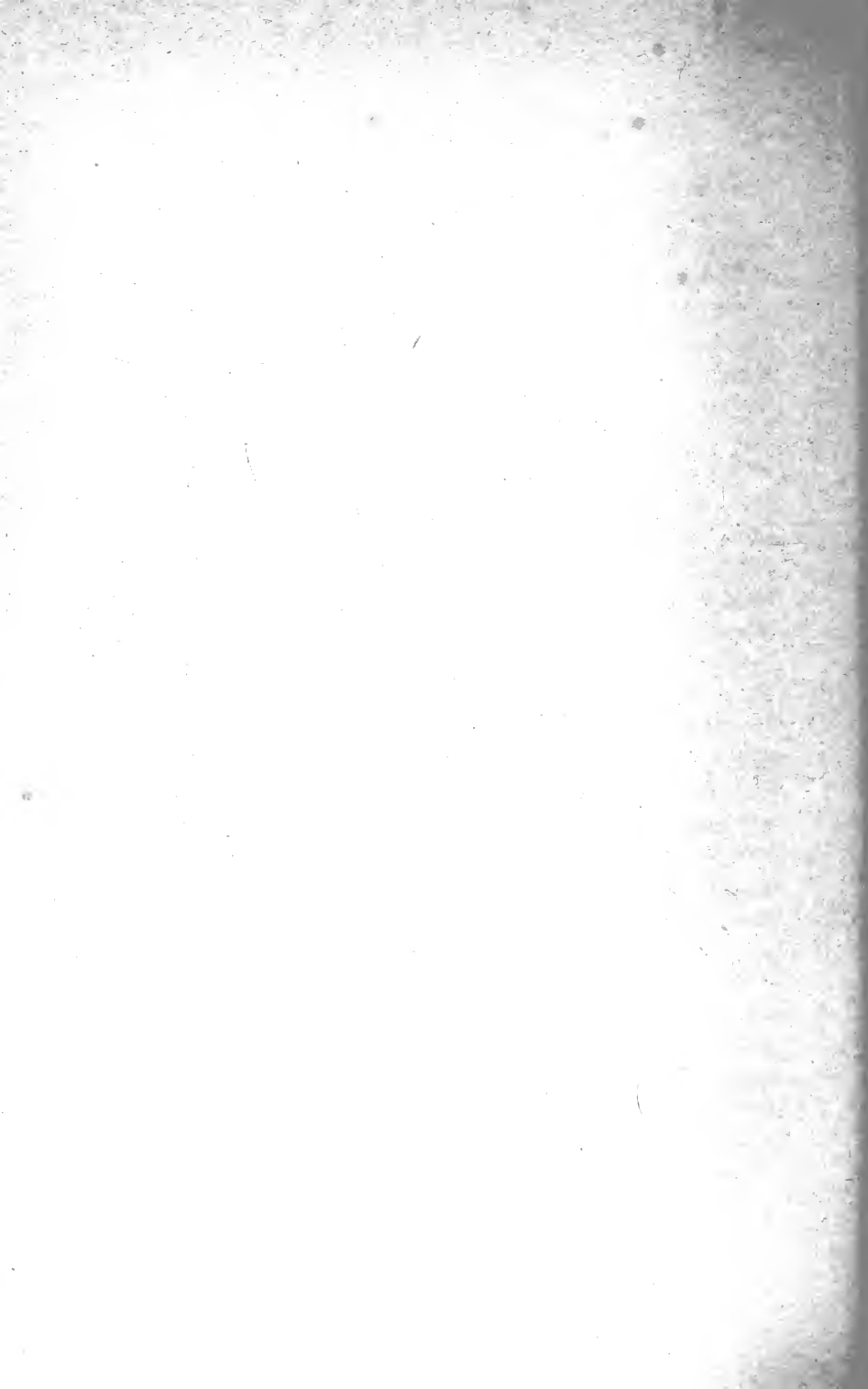
CHAPTER XIV

THE OTHER HOUSE

My chief interest, always, outside the Spalding homestead was in what was called the Other House where dwelt in those days our cousins the Kents. This house was built by Robert Means, the first, in 1785, and he had lived in it until his death in 1823. Afterwards his wife, Mary McGregor, continued to live there until the death of her son David, in 1835, who had lived just across the road. Her relations with her daughter-in-law and her numerous grandchildren were most affectionate and intimate, as we see from the letters of that time; but after the death of David Means, Aunt Lawrence persuaded her to come to Boston; and as her own children were no longer near her in Amherst, she consented to go. She died there January 14, 1838, and was taken to Amherst for burial, on the very day of my grandmother's death, on the seventeenth. After her death her only remaining son, Robert Means, Junior, sold or rented his father's house, I do not know which, and for a time it passed out of the family. Robert Means, Junior, died in Lowell in 1842, and George Kent, his brother-in-law, was married to Lucretia Barnard in 1844; probably it was at about the latter date that Aunt Abba Means, the widow of Robert, bought and restored the house for her own resi-



THE OLD ROBERT MEANS HOUSE



dence. It was understood that she did this partly, at least, for her brother George and his wife, although she and her mother, Aunt Kent, lived there until her death in 1857. It was Aunt Kent, who, when living there with her daughter, placed the busts of two of the sons-in-law of the original owner on the stair-landing at the exact heights at which they stood in life. Jeremiah Mason, six feet and seven inches, occupies one corner of the landing; and opposite is Amos Lawrence—well, I cannot tell his height: but he was small of stature though great in goodness and generosity to his fellow-creatures.

Abba Means left the house to her sister Mary, Mrs. McGregor, who kept it as the home of her brother and his family, though often spending a part of the summers there with her daughters. George Kent died in 1883, and a year later Annie was married there to Mr. Charles Theodore Carruth, and went to live in Boston, and later in Cambridge. Still the house was the home of Mrs. Kent and Lu Myrick until Lu died, and Mrs. Kent went to live with her daughter in Cambridge. When Mrs. McGregor died, the house became the property of Annie Kent Carruth and in due course of time will descend to her son Charles and his little daughter. I have thus tried to make clear the history of the house as *property*, but it is full of associations of a more intimate and interesting kind.

To resume the narration of the cousins whose home it was as I first knew it. George Kent was

deaf and dumb, but not congenitally so. It was the result of an epidemic of spotted fever which prevailed in New Hampshire when he was hardly more than a baby. His sister, Mrs. McGregor, once told me the story of her father's discovery of his affliction. The little boy had recovered from his illness, and nothing unusual was noticed about him until one day his father, returning home, was about to drive his horse and chaise into the barn when he noticed the child playing there on the floor. He called to him to get out of the way, but George paid no attention. Again he called, with no result, and becoming somewhat uneasy, he dismounted and entering the barn he called again, at the same time stamping his foot to emphasize his words. Feeling the vibration, George looked up quickly; and his father, guessing the truth, took the boy in his arms and carried him into the house. The first person he met was his daughter Mary, and giving him into her arms, he said: "Mary, this child is deaf and dumb, and you must care for him as long as he lives." George was sent for his education to the American Institute for the Deaf and Dumb at Hartford, and there met Miss Lucretia Barnard the lady who, in 1844, became his wife.

One can easily imagine the anxiety of the mother and sisters of Mr. Kent when he married, and especially before the birth of his child. But the event only goes to show the divine wisdom of "taking no thought for the morrow": for the great happiness that child brought, not only to her parents

and Lu, but to countless others who have known and loved and rejoiced in her ever since is to prove a thousand times over how short-sighted the wisest are when they try to measure the future by their knowledge of the past.

When I first came to Amherst, Annie must have been in her eighteenth year, and a very charming young woman she was—charming to look at and to talk with, and to know. As if Nature wished to compensate her parents for their misfortune, she endowed the child in full measure with all the gifts they had been denied, with the additional one of music: for she was not only a true lover of music, but she played delightfully on the piano, to the great enjoyment of her friends. And at one time she was the organist in the church, when her playing ministered to the spirit, as well as to the understanding of the worshippers.

With the Kents lived their adopted daughter, a niece of Mrs. Kent, Lucretia B. Myrick, who was like a second mother to Annie; and if any child can need more than one mother, I think it must be a child whose own mother is deaf and dumb. For deep mother love and that tie that transcends all others, there is only *one* mother. But to train a child up in the way it should go needs someone who has all her senses, with the addition of a deep and wise love. She must hear that she may more effectually speak; she must teach the child the law and the gospel. And such a relation Annie found in her adopted sister, Lu, who gave herself to her

charge with entire devotion. If Annie had inherited the lack of her parents, she would have needed no one save her mother, but she seemed to have quicker senses than the average child, and therefore it was Lu who must fill the gap. Lu was a conscientious and sensible woman. She loved God whom she had not seen, and her neighbor whom she had seen, and she gave of her best to the child she loved above all, except her Maker.

Mrs. Kent was a sweet and gentle woman. As is so often the case with those who are deprived of their hearing, or indeed any sense, some other perception seemed added to her, to give her an insight into the personality of her friends and neighbors. She would sometimes express this insight by quite extraordinary powers of mimicry. They were too acute not to be founded on some deeper perception of character than the mere outward idiosyncrasies of the body. I used to hold limited conversations with her by writing on a pad, but not so could one learn to know her. Only by that curious hidden sense of the personality of those we often see; a sense that has nothing to do with the more superficial mind, which registers our likes and dislikes, our opinions and even our affection, but works without our volition and seems to have little to do with us except to show us at times the other side of the screen. So I seem now to know Annie's mother more truly than when I used to see her.

Mr. Kent was a famous fisherman, as the "His-

tory of Amherst" has seen fit to record. He was an interesting man, even though he could not tell you what he was thinking about; and he had one of the most expressive countenances I have ever seen. I used to think his face was like a rugged mountainside across whose surface storm and sunshine reflected nature's moods. He was a Kent and therefore had the gift of humor, though much which is finest of that quality must escape the mind if the power to hear is lacking.

CHAPTER XV

AN AMHERST SUNDAY

One of my friends has asked me to describe a single day in Amherst, and I think I cannot do better than to give such an account, as I can, of a Sunday. My readers will have observed, if they have read the letters of the earlier generations, that Sunday was almost invariably spoken of as the Sabbath and that custom still prevailed when I was young. I know not whether the use of that name added a peculiar sanctity to the day, but there is no doubt that in those times it was far more strictly observed than it has been now for many years and I am sure that the spiritual atmosphere of a Sunday in Amherst made it wholly different from other days. It used to seem as if the very animals knew it was Sunday. There was a serene, peaceful brightness over the town like George Herbert's

"O day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,
The week were dark but for thy light."

In the minister's family in those days there was no late breakfast, but the family gathered around the table, if anything, a little earlier than usual. After breakfast when the necessary household

affairs had been attended to, Cousin Abba and Rebecca would devote themselves to their Sunday School lessons while I would read some such light literature as the "Congregationalist." Then came the time to prepare for church, or, as our forebears used to say, for meeting, and when the second bell began to ring we left the house in our Sunday best. It was interesting to see all over the Plain the people coming out of their doors, suitably attired and moving sedately towards the House of God.

Mr. Davis started a few minutes before we did and we knew that as soon as he arrived and walked up the aisle the organ voluntary would begin. The bell rang fifteen minutes, the last five it tolled and we felt we must be well past Lucy Boylston's corner when the tolling began in order that we might be decently early, as became members of the minister's family.

I should like to see that church to-day as it looked then. The narrow straight-backed pews were painted white, the tall pulpit also white with a flight of steps up which the minister went and shut the door. There was a long red curtain which hung behind the pulpit and formed a beautiful background for the preacher. The minister's pew was the second one from the front on the right side. In the front pew sat the Reverend Doctor Clark (Brother William) in his suit of clerical black, and his sister Miss Lydia. On the front of that pew, a few inches below the top, was a narrow

shelf and I well remember that when the sermon began Brother William would take out his ponderous watch and, without disguising the rattle, place it on the shelf to time the sermon.

As the last toll of the bell died away Mr. Davis arose and stretching out his hands in invitation the congregation stood while he invoked God's blessing on the service which had just begun. Then a hymn was sung, the congregation still standing, and after they were seated the reading from the Bible followed and then what was technically called the long prayer. After that there was another hymn during which the congregation remained seated, a reading of the notices for the coming week and then the sermon, which was followed by a closing prayer, a hymn and the benediction. The service was beautiful in its simplicity and dignity.

Mr. Davis, as I have said, was a man of a scholarly mind and a deeply religious nature. His sermons were absolutely free from sensationalism; they made you think, but they also inspired you to action, and it would have been hard to get away from their spiritual and practical wisdom. Perhaps even more than his sermons his prayers—when he spoke as to One whom he knew from constant communion—showed the depth and beauty of his spiritual life.

When the service was over there was the greeting of friends as those who were to remain for the Sabbath School moved to their places. I always

betook myself across the Common to the Kents' in company with any member of that family who did not remain for Sunday School. There we were regaled with light refreshments and a glass of wine and a little friendly gossip or other worldly conversation. Rebecca usually came over for the very brief interval between the closing of the Sabbath School and the beginning of the afternoon service to which the bell called us soon after one o'clock. It was much like the morning service only shorter and we were at home by half-past two.

The table was soon spread for dinner and as we sat around it in familiar intercourse, Cousin Abba, in her capacity of wifely critic, would often open a discussion of the sermon with some question such as: "My dear, why did you pronounce r-o-u-t-e as if it were r-o-w-te," or "Why did you fail to press home such and such a point?" Mr. Davis could be trusted to defend himself warmly and ably, and as the discussion was on purely technical questions there was no blood drawn. Sometimes we younger ones would be tempted to join in the fray, but the two were so evenly matched that it would have been a pity to spoil the sport. I do not remember that either ever gave in. The discussion would merge into friendly comment upon parish affairs, "who was out at meeting and who was not," and comments on books or worldly things in general. But I often wondered how far the excellence of the sermons we heard was due to the pungent criticisms of the preacher's wife. It is

good for man or woman to have a friendly critic in the family.

After the dinner was over and all traces of it removed, we occupied ourselves with books or writing and sometimes Rebecca and I took a walk, or in the cool of the day went out into the garden. Early in the evening, the church bells again called people to prayer. I seldom went to this third service.

Mr. Davis, alone or with Rebecca, answered the call. When they returned we had our informal supper; a pitcher of milk, bread and butter, custard and cake were placed on the table and we helped ourselves to whatever we wanted. That was the last function of the day that was distinctively of the Sabbath.

I have often heard men, and sometimes women, excuse their non-attention to their religious duties by referring to the severe New England Sabbath of their youth with its restrictions and joylessness. There was always a certain self-satisfaction in their remarks as if to say how much farther the world had progressed since they were freed from old world narrowness; but when hearing these comments I have always remembered a certain sermon by a great preacher the point of which was that Christians should never give up the old unless they were able to substitute a new which was more deeply spiritual and acceptable to God; and when I think of those Amherst Sundays I cannot feel that the modern week-end follows that simple rule.

CHAPTER XVI

CHURCH AND TOWN

Before entering on this chapter of my story, I must remind my readers that I am trying to describe conditions of "Church and State" as they existed fifty years ago. I have already described an Amherst Sunday, and that must stand as a high light on the church as I saw it then. In looking over the notes I made at that time concerning the more secular side of affairs in Amherst, I am struck with the fact that most of the public entertainment frequented by the "best people" of the town radiated from the church. Of course there were tea parties now and then, and even dinner parties on rare occasions; but the dances and card parties of an earlier day when Amherst was a legal centre were things of the past. Church sociables, sewing societies, an occasional celebration of some public event or anniversary of importance were the most frivolous festivities, while for the more serious-minded there were occasional Protracted Meetings, and the weekly prayer meeting which gave them an opportunity of expressing their views on religion or theology. Probably my readers will not think there was much entertainment in these things, but in those days I can assure them there was, or the participants *thought* there was, which answered all purposes.

I do not think that there were any respectable members of society, in the days when I first formed the habit of going to Amherst, who were not also members of the church. The church edifice that was built at the time of the Unitarian heresy had been sold years before, through lack of interest or followers, to the Baptists, who still worship there. I do not think there have ever been many Methodists in Amherst, and the small brick building that was used by them in those days has since fallen into the hands of such worldly persons as desire to dance and engage in kindred pursuits. The greater number of the inhabitants have always been connected with the Congregational church: at any rate it is to that form of church polity that most of the persons of whom I write adhered. Charles H. Atherton, it is true, shook the dust of orthodox Congregationalism from off his feet, and betook himself to the Unitarian branch of the same; his sisters Aunt Kent and Aunt Nancy followed his lead. There must have been lively controversies in those days. Aunt Appleton, for instance, good woman as she certainly was, seems to have had no hesitation in settling the Lord's business by awarding to those who died unregenerate, as she thought, their place in the world to come. Then there was the letter from Uncle James, that genial and charming gentleman, beseeching Aunt Nancy most affectionately and earnestly to abandon her Unitarian belief and return to orthodox views lest her soul's future be

imperilled. And I have been told that when Doctor Lord left Amherst to become President of Dartmouth, he expressed the conviction that there were only three persons in town of whose ultimate salvation he felt assured. Of those three my grandmother was one.

Doctor Lord was a Calvinist, according to the strictest sect; but at that time in the matter of strictness of doctrine there does not seem much choice between orthodox Congregationalists and their Unitarian brethren. His predecessor at Amherst, the Reverend Jeremiah Barnard, settled there in 1780 through the influence of Joshua Atherton, was noted, Charles H. Atherton's memoir states, for his tolerance in religion and his lack of it in politics. But when in his sixty-fourth year, his powers of mind and body began to fail, it was thought best to provide him with a colleague, and the choice fell upon Nathan Lord, then a young man. The "History of Amherst" thus records the difference between the two men: "Mr. Barnard was styled an Arminian in his religious belief, and had but little sympathy with his Calvinistic brethren. In his church all shades of belief were tolerated, and all had an opportunity by the system of ministerial exchanges to occasionally hear their own peculiar views expounded and enforced. Mr. Lord, on the contrary, was a decided Calvinist, and, his teaching corresponding with his belief, a diversity of opinion among the members of the church soon became apparent." These differences

almost immediately led to a separation, in which certain members, notably Charles H. Atherton, seceded and founded a Unitarian Society called The Christian Society of Amherst. Of course Mr. Lord objected to any use of the meeting-house, which was at that time owned by the town, but of which he was the minister. Even so eminent a Christian and Unitarian as the Reverend Henry Ware of Cambridge, to whose occupancy of the pulpit for one Sunday the town had consented, was refused by the minister. He addressed a note to Mr. Ware on his arrival in town in which he said it "could not be supposed that he would favor his engagement, or acquiesce in the wishes of his friends." Mr. Ware therefore preached in the court house. We have had more light on Mr. Lord's character in our account of the controversy over the death-bed testimony of Mrs. Charles H. Atherton. He is said to have been a great President of Dartmouth, though his well known views on the subject of slavery were not such as were popular in New England.

In describing the Amherst that I knew fifty years ago, and looking over the notes I made at that time, I realize my own youth and the lack of charity often shown in my conclusions. At the same time, clearly as I may see my own limitations, I know that I must not fail to set down things and persons as I saw them if I desire to give even a semblance of reality to my story. Of course people did not look at many things as they do to-day.

Probably there are no persons now who would deem themselves competent to decide the eternal destinies of those who did not agree with their standards of belief or conduct; and if the men and women of that time who were so ready to pronounce on the fate of those differing from them in theology had had the power to carry out their prophecies, I have often wondered how many would have been left to inhabit the Heavenly mansions prepared for them! They were good people, even the strictest of them; they had been brought up to accept the severer aspects of religion and honestly believed that so they must bring up their children. Yet beliefs were much less severe generally than in the generation preceding, and already the Andover heresy, as it was called, was beginning to attract attention and sympathetic understanding.

On one of my winter visits to Amherst I had arrived by the noon train, and was the only passenger in the old sleigh-stage, which could not get up much speed on account of the deep snow. When we were passing the Baptist parsonage, the wife of the minister hailed the stage, and as she was getting in she stumbled and fell flat at my feet. But she did not lose her manners, and while lying prone on the straw at the bottom of the vehicle, she turned her head and looking up at me said: "Please excuse my entering so abruptly." When I had helped her up and brushed the straw from her garments, she asked me where I was going. "You won't find anyone at home," said she. "They'll all

be at meeting. We are having a series of Protracted Meetings at the Congregational Church, and they'll every one of them be there." I assured her it did not matter as I was to stay several days. But I was curious about Protracted Meetings, for although I was at that time a member in "good and regular standing" of the Old South Church in Andover, I knew nothing of that kind of gathering.

Rebecca was at home, in spite of the lady's prophecy. She served me with *two* dropped eggs cooked exactly right; and while I was partaking of them, I sought information. Perhaps that is the reason I always associate dropped eggs with Protracted Meetings! Certain members of the Y. M. C. A. are invited by a deacon or other officer of the church to come to a town to hold these meetings for a week or so. They begin every morning quite early, continue to noon; begin again at two o'clock and last until it is time to go home and get supper; come in again about seven, and last until nine or later. The exercises are of the kind called "getting up a revival." Those who are not members of the church are most earnestly begged to come forward for prayers in their behalf; and the success of the meetings is gauged by the number that respond to this appeal.

That night I went to one of the meetings, and I distinctly remember one of the young men telling a story of a girl who, though apparently much moved by the appeal, could not be induced to come

forward to confess her sins and be prayed for. That night she was taken ill and before long she was dead. "And her soul was undoubtedly lost forever." These last words I have never been able to forget. A pleasanter memory is of a scene at the Spalding house after we had returned from one of these meetings. As usual, the leader had asked all who were professing Christians to rise, and Cousin Abba now said to Mr. Davis: "My dear, how could you sit there so unmoved? When all Christians were asked to rise, you never stirred." "Well, my dear," was the answer, "I have been minister of that church for many years, and if the people of Amherst don't know whether I am a Christian or not my getting up or sitting still will not tell them anything."

CHAPTER XVII

THE NEIGHBORS

As time went on I never missed a chance to go to Amherst and as I frequently made long visits there before Rebecca's marriage, and afterward went often to stay with Cousin Abba and Mr. Davis, I grew to know many of the people who made up the town: for a minister's house in such a place is the centre of parish life, and in a sense parish life is the town life. I will refer here to a clause in the petition written by one of my aunts and printed at the beginning of this volume in effect that I should write freely of my impressions without restraining any sense of humor with which I might be endowed, as it was *not* to be a book for the general public but strictly a family affair. It may be well then for me to make clear that I have not and shall not set down aught in malice, but that I shall write freely of any person or thing *as I saw it*. It is one of the most dangerous and often untrue things to say of anyone that he or she has *no* sense of humor. For that sense shows itself in such diverse forms that who shall be the judge? There is the Deacon, for instance: I am sure that he would have been greatly surprised that anyone should think him lacking in that quality with which, as his solemn pleasantries proclaimed, he believed himself to be richly endowed. The trouble

was, I think, that he mistook his facetiousness for humor: whereas my worldly mind regarded him chiefly as a feeder of that sense which is my own family heritage.

Our nearest neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. John O. David who were, like the Kents, both deaf-mutes; and Mr. David was a preacher to those who were afflicted as he was. I was told that so great was his dramatic power that he could deeply impress even those who could hear, and were not accustomed to depend upon the sign language, with his rendering of many Bible stories, particularly that of the Prodigal Son. On one occasion a gentleman who had come to Amherst to see the home of his ancestors, attracted by the sound of singing had dropped into the chapel and after the meeting attached himself to Mr. David as an intelligent looking citizen going his way toward the Spalding house. He attempted to draw out Mr. David as to affairs in Amherst, and afterward told us that the man seemed so taciturn and disinclined for conversation that he gave up the effort in despair—quite unconscious that he had been trying to interview a deaf-mute. Mr. David always went to prayer meeting, and my own chief recollection of him is in connection with such a meeting. It was sometime in the summer of the Franco-Prussian War. Mr. Davis and Cousin Abba were away from home, but Rebecca and I thought it right to go to the Weekly Meeting. When we entered the chapel, there were some dozen ladies present who

looked up hopefully, but finding that we were only two more of their own sex relapsed into indifference. We joined the sedate and silent sisterhood. Not then had come the day in New England villages when the sisters spoke in meeting. By and by a manly tread was heard approaching and we straightened up in anticipation. But when the brother entered, behold, Mr. John O. David! We might have asked for his rendering of the story of the Prodigal Son; but if you had ever attended such village evening meetings in the 'seventies, you would know there never was light enough to make such a performance sufficiently clear. So we still waited until, at last, we heard not only footsteps but masculine voices drawing near. Our courage revived when the Deacon entered with Brother William Clark. The Deacon, in virtue of his office, occupied the desk, and after a brief prayer chose for his reading the Ninety-seventh Psalm, emphasizing especially the verse "Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." He began his comments by very pessimistic remarks on the low state of religion in the Amherst Church. Why were there not more people at the prayer meeting? Of course because they were too much occupied with their worldly affairs. But God would certainly judge and punish us. Was He not indeed showing us His judgments already in the war in Europe, a visitation of cholera in another place, and the terrible drought from which we were suf-

fering? It seemed a heavy indictment for the Amherst church, as there represented, to stagger under. A dozen Christian women, a deaf and dumb brother, who was, indeed, fortunate in this instance in not being able to hear, an old clergyman, and the Deacon himself. The ungodly had not come to the meeting to hear themselves reprov'd. Then up rose Brother Clark, looking like a Minor Prophet, with his tall gaunt form and somewhat unkempt appearance. In summer he usually wore a linen duster, not quite as freshly laundered as one could have wished; but somehow there was that about him that while it might make you smile, the smile was untainted with any disrespect. He was fond of sonorous sentences which would roll out in his deep bass tones. One I always remember which he used that night: "I shall be the very same individual whom you see standing here before you untold millions of ages hence." He used to have a rather casual way of speaking of the dead sometimes, for instance: "Brother Hale, formerly of Hopkinton, now of Heaven." The letter which he wrote to Rebecca on her marriage illustrates another side of him.

Brother Clark, the Reverend Doctor Clark, familiarly called "Brother William," was a widower and lived just beyond the Davids with his two sisters, Miss Letitia and Miss Lydia. Miss Lydia had not the precise ways of her sister, but was what I might call a somewhat "chipper" person, darting from one thing to another in her con-

versation so rapidly that it was sometimes hard to follow her. She was as busy as a bee attending to her household affairs, and chattered away of anything that came into her head. Occasionally she became somewhat of a Mrs. Malaprop, as when, for instance, she called her sister to the window to see "Eliza Means and her paramour," alluding thus to Aunt Eliza's *fiancé*, the highly respectable and well-bred Mr. Bigelow. Miss Letitia was somewhat of an invalid, and except once when I took tea there, I never saw her out of the front room where she sat surrounded with books and papers. She was a diligent reader of religious publications and liked to talk about articles in the "Congregationalist" and other papers of that ilk. Her conversation was somewhat prim and very precise, yet she evidently wished to impress her visitors as a citizen of the world, and I remember her asking me with polite interest if I ever attended the drama. She had known my uncles and aunts in their young days, and was especially interested in my Uncle James. She asked me concerning his children and when I spoke of his only son she inquired anxiously whether he was a worthy youth. I intimated that he had reached the time in life when his worthy habits were quite fixed. Miss Letitia was the first of the sisters to die. Afterwards when I went to Amherst and called on Miss Lydia, she described her sister's death in pathetic fashion. "Yes, I was sure she was going, and when I saw the end was right at hand, I called Brother.

‘Brother,’ I said, ‘Sister is going.’ He came at once and the moment he looked at her, he said to me: ‘Lydia, Letitia has gone.’ I said ‘I am aware of it, Brother. I am aware of it.’”

In the next house to Doctor Clark lived one of the chief citizens of the town, whom I will call the Deacon. I have already alluded to his part in the prayer meeting Rebecca and I attended. And like Brother William he had maiden sisters—three of them—Miss Mary, Miss Katie and Miss Lucy, who lived not far from the Spaldings in the house that had been their father’s. When I first visited Amherst and became acquainted with the aristocracy of the town, my aunts had instructed me that I must on no account fail to call on the Misses B.; and if I had failed to heed their request, Cousin Abba would have seen that I did my duty. The B.s were old time residents of the town and the sisters had grown up with Cousin Abba and my aunts. Miss Mary I already knew, for many years before she had visited Aunt Mary Jane when I was at school in Newark, and I had been deputed to take her to walk and show her the town. She had a certain touch of acerbity in her tone, but she was not the less likeable for that, and she was an essentially kind and good woman and a very honest one. Miss Katie was gentle and to a stranger seemed lacking in a positive quality. But Miss Lucy! I can see her now, with her sharp black eyes watching you to see if she could catch you tripping; and she would ask for my aunts in a tone conveying

great disapproval. Though a rich woman, she kept no maid lest the maid should "look over her shoulder." When the church members gathered for social intercourse, she greatly disapproved if she heard any of them returning home after ten o'clock. She outlived her sisters, and after Miss Mary's death her peculiarities increased until she did not seem sane. And she died, as she had lived, alone. On a cold snowy Saturday afternoon soon after Cousin Abba's death, a neighbor who called upon Miss Lucy found her in a softened mood and noticed that she spoke kindly of old friends and neighbors. Miss F. left about dark and no one thereafter went into the house until Monday morning when the storm had cleared and the man who shovelled her path went for her mail. When he returned and entered the house, he found her lifeless body on the sofa where she slept, and where she had probably died soon after the neighbor left her two days before.

Their brother, the Deacon, was a contemporary of my father and Uncle James. I have often heard my father tell a story of how when someone had given the boy Edward a spyglass all the boys of the town flocked about him to see the wonderful toy. Whereupon Edward, looking them over, exclaimed: "James may look through my spyglass, but William *sha'n't!*" This story teaches the children of William that truly the child is father to the man, and that the love of teasing which they had encountered in

their dealings with their father had probably been exercised on his schoolmates.

Edward, in due time, inherited his father's business, that of printer and editor of the Amherst paper, "The Farmer's Cabinet." He was a man of medium height, rather thin, his head crowned with white hair; he had narrow eyes, a red nose, and what I call a "Baptist mouth." He belonged to the severe type of Congregationalism. He was essentially a deacon—a born deacon, I might say. Those of us who have grown up in a New England country town know well what an important person in the church, and often in the community, was the deacon. Many such men stood for righteousness and the fear and love of God; and as I think of them I am convinced that these good men and citizens far outnumber those who have given a somewhat sinister reputation to the title. In looking over my notes made so many years ago, I realize deeply the unripeness of my judgment: the Deacon, for instance, must have had many qualities which endeared him to his family of which I had no perception; but he certainly had many unlovely ones of which my perception was very keen, and I can only set him down as I saw him.

To stir up the emotions of a congregation with Protracted Meetings was as the very breath of his nostrils, and next to Protracted Meetings, nothing so appealed to him as funerals. There was a peculiar elasticity in his gait as he hastened to the house of mourning on the first tidings of a death

which caused an observer to ask, on seeing him pass, "Who has died?" And in his own sketch of his life he thus alludes to his somewhat sepulchral tastes: "In all my life it has been my lot to be familiar with death; in boyhood even to bear, with others, the form of many a companion to its burial, *amid temptation to drink*; in early and later manhood oft both as watcher or visitor with sick and dying, and in charge of obsequies, twice in manhood personally called to look the grim Messenger in the face, once since the commencing of this book. So sweet and abiding are the recollections of the others that I have purposely retained their recital for this closing chapter."

Once when Cousin Abba was leaving the house of a neighbor after a funeral service, she heard the voice of the Deacon — it was a very nasal voice — saying in her ear: "Mrs. Davis, have you noticed how remarkably well adapted this house is for a funeral?" And on another occasion Annie Caruth, then Annie Kent, was returning to Amherst after a visit, when at the Corner she encountered the Deacon in company with a large pasteboard box. He greeted her in his portentous way asking if she had heard from home lately. Her heart sank at his tone as she said "Not for several days." "Well, then," he said, tapping the box, "it may interest you to know that this box contains the shroud of your neighbor." There are neighbors and neighbors, and some were dearer than others, so Annie's eyes asked the question she dared not voice.

But it turned out that the deceased was someone who had recently come to town and was hardly known to her. It always seemed a pity to me that the Deacon could not "take charge" of his own "obsequies" he would have enjoyed the occasion so much.

The Deacon had named his house Busyfield, and toward the close of his life he wrote a book about himself and the Almighty, which he called "Sketch of a Busy Life at Busyfield and Elsewhere, by the One Who Lived It." Some study of this book convinces me that the Deacon was a self-deceived man. I think he meant to be sincere but he made himself believe that all who failed to see religious truth with his eyes and feel it with his convictions were travelling on the broad way that leads to destruction, and he condemned such to all the terrors of everlasting punishment. I could tell many more tales about him which would prevent my taking him at his own valuation; but the following extracts from his writings give me an opportunity to present him in his own words.

Busyfield, Dec. 25, 1878.

'T was Christmas morn and a father gray,
Took down his Bible to read and pray,
As was his wont with each new day:

Turning around to his usual seat
A very strange sight his vision did greet,
'T was big as the heart of the giver sweet:

An easy and well provided chair,
 Covered with leather, and stuffed with hair,
 "For Father, from Abby," was written there:

Where rested his long-time whitened hair
 Was buttoned secure a tidy fair,
 "From Emma to Father," it did bear:

On the cushion lay, in colors gay,
 Slippers, for comfort at close of day,
 When worn and weary he comes home to pray:

Tokens as fitting of love as rare,
 And of the grace that placed them there, —
 On these "From Nellie, for Father" to wear.

The story was read of the Little Child
 Born, living and dying all undefiled,
 To rescue our souls by sin beguiled, —

And the father knelt and asked kind Heaven
 That blissful seat up there be given
 To each, when earthly ties are riven.

AN EDITOR SOLD BY HIS FAMILY

Do not startle, gentle reader, but such an event has occurred in the full blaze of the 19th century. On Tuesday last, the editor of the Cabinet took it into his head to complete the half-century of his mortal existence, and his family took it into their heads to give him a genuine 'surprise,' which, aided by a little natural deafness and debility of his, and

a deal of strategy of theirs, well played, was a perfect success. He was home early, as his widowed mother was to honor his semi-centennial at an early tea, and while she rested in the big easy rocker drawn up by the sofa, doffing his boots, he threw himself upon the sofa, (the trap set for him,) to entertain her, while tea was preparing. On opposite side of hall was suite of rooms, always warmed, and at the exact moment named some twenty-five gentlemen and ladies were silently and surprisingly gathered therein, and not a suspicion on my part of other than the mother about. Suddenly a call was made for me to see "what had happened to the big mirror in the parlor!" Rushing in, in my stocking feet, and blue ones at that my credulity was forever squelched by the "haw-haw-haw" and greetings of the happiest company of neighbors ever mirrored in that glass. The evening was largely enjoyed by surprisers and surprised, and closed with an acknowledgment of the Divine goodness by the Pastor, and a full belief in surprises.

TWELVE FACTS

CONCERNING MIXED DANCING

1. That the health theory of dancing is denied by the highest medical authority.
2. That modern dancing, however well done, adds no worth to character.

3. That mixed dancing becomes extremely fascinating to those who engage in it.

4. That it requires no intelligence and no virtue to dance well.

5. That much valuable time is lost, and much hard-earned money wasted in this form of revelry.

6. That young ladies permit familiarities on the dance-floor which public sentiment universally condemns as dangerous to purity and virtue. A late Chief of Police in N. Y. City testified that 75 per ct. of the abandoned girls of that city were ruined by dancing. A Roman Catholic Bishop of N. Y. makes the startling statement that the work of the Confessional revealed the fact that 19 out of every 20 women who fall and are lost, can trace the beginning of their downward career to the modern dance.

7. That social home-dancing is the gateway to public ball-room and theatre.

8. That those who delight in dancing parties are generally fond of the wine cup, novels and the card table.

9. That no one was ever noted for dancing and piety at the same time.

10. That a dancing church member is worth no more to the church than a dancing minister.

11. That like kindred evils it courts the night and late hours for its revels.

12. That the most ardent advocates of dancing have always changed their views in the presence of death; and no one would care to meet death in a dance-hall.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE END

After the death of Mr. Davis in 1894, I used to go quite often to Amherst to visit Cousin Abba. Someone was always with her as companion; Rebecca and her children came when they could; and Mary and Dora Spalding, like myself, went from time to time. We all missed the kind and interested friend to whose interest and counsel we owed so much. My own father had died only two or three months before, and I think I missed Mr. Davis all the more on that account as I had many new duties and responsibilities in some of which I should have been glad of his advice. Cousin Abba was some years older than her husband, and I was struck with her saying one day when we were taking a drive and talking of him: "I never thought he would go so soon. Though of course I always knew that he did not belong to a long-lived family." Which shows how differently we regard age as our own increases. Cousin Abba herself lived until January, 1900.

It has not been my purpose in this chronicle to speak of the living except when it was necessary to make my story complete; and as my task nears its end I wish to commemorate the child who seemed to belong more truly than any other to the Amherst I knew. Mary Seaton, the youngest daugh-

ter of George and Rebecca Spalding, was born in New York on the eighth of July, 1884, and died there on the twenty-seventh of February, 1898. But her fourteen summers she spent in her grandmother's house at Amherst, and she loved Amherst with a passionate devotion. I remember she took the deepest interest in the families of young children there, and often took care of them when their mothers wished to go to Milford for the afternoon. She was never so happy as when at Amherst; but it would be hard to imagine that she could be set down in any corner of the earth without finding herself at home. She savored life to the utmost, and every experience which came to her in the few short years she was with us was of the deepest interest to her. About a year before her death she visited me in Boston, and one night when I went into her room at ten o'clock, I found her wide awake. "Why, Mary, you awake at this hour!" I exclaimed. "Yes, Aunt Anne," said she, "I'm just lying awake to think how perfectly happy I am."

She was a child of ardent temperament, with a singular understanding and love of her kind. The sympathetic quality of her mind, which made her comprehension of others almost uncanny in its quickness, her humor, her deep and loyal affection, and even her naughtiness endeared her to all who knew her. But there was an elusive quality about her which made some of us fear that she would some day slip away from us in spite of every effort to hold her. She was impulsive, but there was a

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See opposite side

Insure to-day—to-morrow may be too late!

On opposite side of this card are the following suggestions:

"Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."—Isaiah i. 18.

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."—Hebrews iii. 7, 8.

To-day. {	Christ.	To-morrow. {	Satan.
<i>Dont Delay!</i>		<i>No Hurry!</i>	

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.—Prov. xxvii. 1.

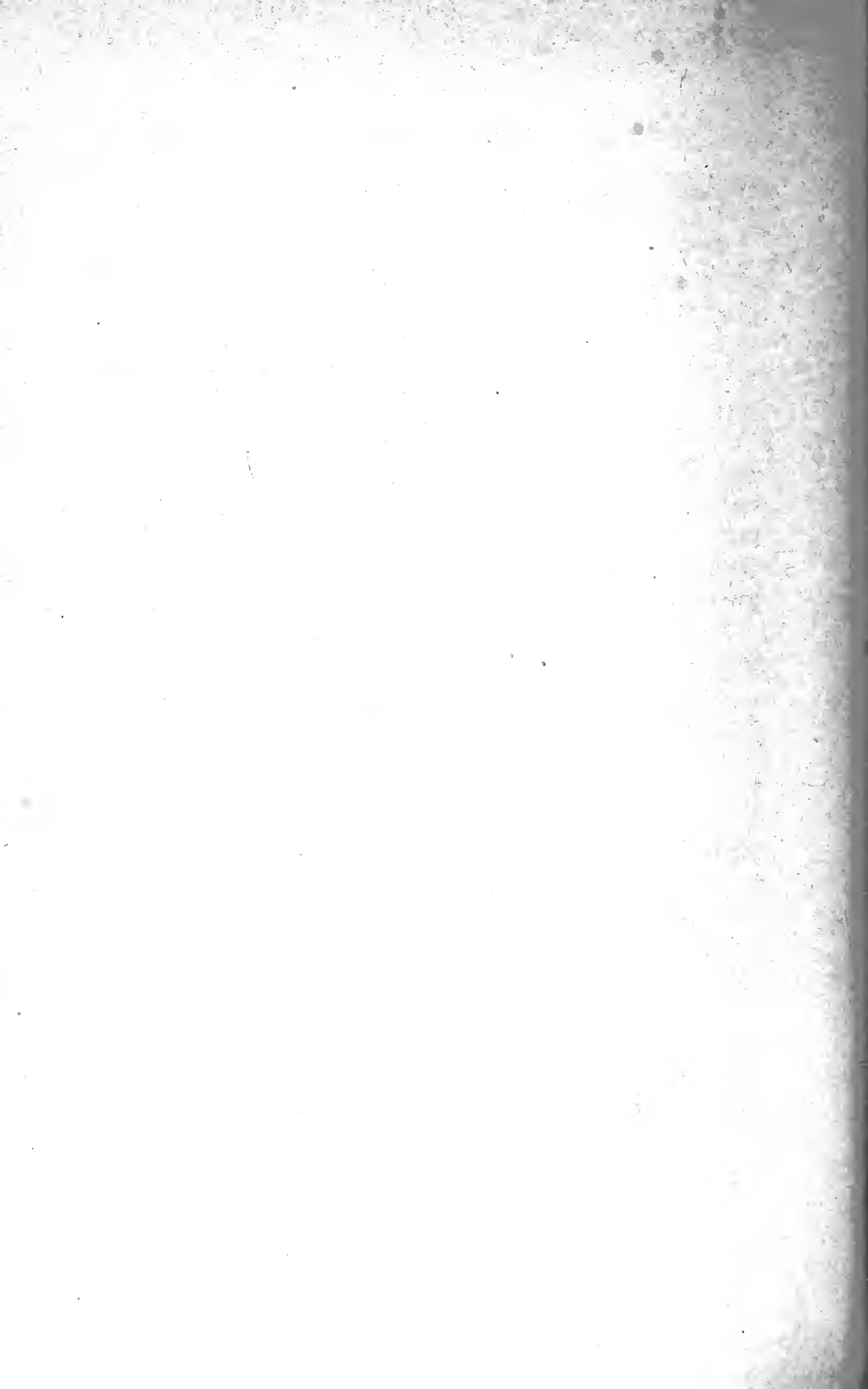
"Go to now, ye that say to-day or to-morrow, * * ye know not what shall be on the morrow."—Js iv 13

"If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself ; but if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it.—Pr. ix. 12

"Be wise to-day ;

It's madness to defer !"

THE DEACON'S CARD



quality of good sense behind her impulsiveness which kept it in control. And perhaps it was her keen sense of justice which made her appear to enjoy punishment. Sometimes when the Bible was read to her she would ask for stories of those who were wicked and were duly punished for their wickedness, because it made her "feel so comfortable." Whenever she did wrong herself, she looked for the punishment and did not quite respect anyone who failed to give it to her. When she was very small she used often to say to me: "Tell me a story, Aunt Anne, about when you were a little girl and were very naughty, and put in all the particulars."

She certainly knew how to be naughty. Once when she was a very small child, as she was going upstairs one day followed by her sister Honora, she suddenly stopped and Honora stumbled forward with her head under Mary's arm, whereupon Mary began beating Honora's head with a wooden doll. Their father happened to see the performance, and with a long stride he reached Mary and bore her off to another room. The sounds of punishment soon reached our ears. But Mary saw that she had received the just reward for her deed, and was quite happy over it.

During one of my annual visits to New York Mary had been ill with a cold but was convalescent when there was one of those balmy spring days which sometimes come to us before winter is gone. It seemed a good chance for her to go out, and she

and I started for a walk. The melting snow was pouring down the gutters on Fifth Avenue and suddenly Mary, dropping my hand, quick as a flash began to wade. I ordered her out of the gutter, but she paid no attention; and when I caught her under the arms and pulled her out, she made what is called "paper legs" and crumpled up on the sidewalk with a look of infinite satisfaction. The situation required swift action, so I seized the collar of her coat with my left hand and when I got her into position to make the blow effective, I struck her cheek with my right hand. It must have hurt, for I tried it on myself later and know. Mary, however, immediately returned to "normalcy," and looking up at me with a charming smile of congratulation, slipped her hand into mine and trudged along home to have her shoes and stockings changed.

One summer after we had all been at Amherst together, Rebecca and George had gone to a camp with their Uncle Edward, Honora was to go home with me for a visit, and Mary was to be left with her grandparents. The day before I went I thought it wise to have a little cautionary conversation with the child. She listened, as usual, with close attention to my suggestions as to her conduct which wound up with: "Mind your grandmother, Mary." Her instant response was: "Mind grandma, Aunt Anne? Why, I couldn't think of such a thing!" She was devoted to her grandmother and nothing could be further from her intention than troubling

her in any way. She was, as I at once recognized, merely stating a fact in natural history: for there was nothing wilful about her, she was as anxious as I to solve the problem of her small self. We looked seriously at each other, she trying to see a way out, I somewhat dazed at the finality of her statement, and hardly realizing that out of the mouth of the babe before me I had received a lesson which I was never to forget. "I'll mind Ida," she said at last rather doubtfully. Ida was her dearly loved nurse who had a way with her that was most effective in dealing with Mary. "But," I said, "Ida is in the kitchen." She saw the point at once and again considered. At last her brow cleared and joy reigned once more as she exclaimed: "I know, Aunt Anne, the best plan will be for me to be out most of the time." This story of her was vividly recalled the other day when I found a letter of her grandfather's, written shortly after my return, in which he said: "Mary Seaton is well and happy, but we see very little of her as she is out with her young friends most of the time." I perceived that Mary was carrying out her idea of the way to avoid unnecessary trouble.

The tie between Mary and her father was exceedingly close; and after her death Rebecca said to me that no one ever understood George as Mary did, but I think she must have inherited that understanding straight from her mother. One afternoon, when they were still living in One hundred and twenty-fifth Street, George came in to write an

important note. Mary Seaton was rampaging about and he wanted silence. So he called her and taking out a bright new cent, he said: "Now, Mary, I have a note to write. It won't take long, and if you will go over to that corner and sit perfectly still for five minutes, I can write my note and you shall have this penny for your money box." She slid down from his knee and seated herself in her little rocking-chair while he turned to the desk to write his note. I glanced at the child from time to time and was amazed at her absolute stillness; if she had been the graven image of a child, she could not have been stiller. Pretty soon the note was written and sent off, and George began to talk to us without noticing his little daughter. When he chanced to look that way, he exclaimed: "Why, my darling, didn't you understand? You were such a good little girl that papa finished his letter and now you can run about again and do what you please." She still remained a graven image. Her father looked at her a little puzzled and even startled. Then he went to her and took her in his arms. The spell was broken. "Oh, yes, papa," she said, "I did understand. But you see I got so interested in keeping still, I didn't want to stop!"

I have spoken of Mary's devotion to her grandmother, and as she grew older it was beautiful to see how their mutual appreciation developed and how Mary's impetuous nature responded to a deeper understanding of her grandmother's very different qualities. Her own qualities grew and

expanded as naturally as a flower opens; and especially did this seem true of her religion. Full of spirit and fun as she was, she was deeply religious. Of all books she loved the Bible best; and to her the story of the Crucifixion was the heart of it all. She would ask often to have it read to her; though she did not talk of it, you could feel how deeply it was in her thought. And once when she was visiting me over Good Friday, I remember how profoundly she was moved by the service.

She was eager to go to church when she was much too small to go, and she was never willing to begin her breakfast until a blessing had been asked upon the food. When she was still a little tot running about the room, I asked her one Sunday morning if she was going to church. She said "No," and glanced at her mother. Later, when her mother had left the room, she came over to me and said: "Put your head down, Aunt Anne, I want to whisper to you." I immediately did as she wished, and she said: "I went to church and I was a naughty girl and did not keep still and mother said she should not take me again until I had grown old enough to behave." She was very sad about it, but I told her she would soon get over that and be able to go to church all she wished. She brightened and said: "Oh, yes, then I can go and the minister will look at me and say 'How that teenty little girl has growed!'" Her love of going to church, however, did not wane as she grew older; it was always a joy to her. It was as if she shed from her all that

was non-essential in the religious form while that which was vital grew and blossomed. As in everything else, she was joyous in her religion, and I think she was about twelve years old when she joined the church.

She liked, also, to go to prayer meeting, and the eccentricities of some of the speakers afforded her the same amusement as her elders. Once the Deacon at the weekly prayer meeting enlarged on the fact that on a beautiful Sunday afternoon, as he sat on his piazza, he had counted the carriages loaded with pleasure seekers that had passed his house. "And, my brethren," said he, "there were twenty-one carriages, for I counted every one. Twenty-one carriages, all filled with Sabbath-breakers, passing through our peaceful village!" The following Sunday Mary was not very well, and she was sitting beside me on the front doorstep when five or six boys on bicycles rode through the town. She looked up at me with a twinkle in her eye as she said: "Sabbath-breakers!" I smiled in response and went on with my reading. After a short time she said earnestly: "Oh, don't you wish some more Sabbath-breakers would go by, Aunt Anne?"

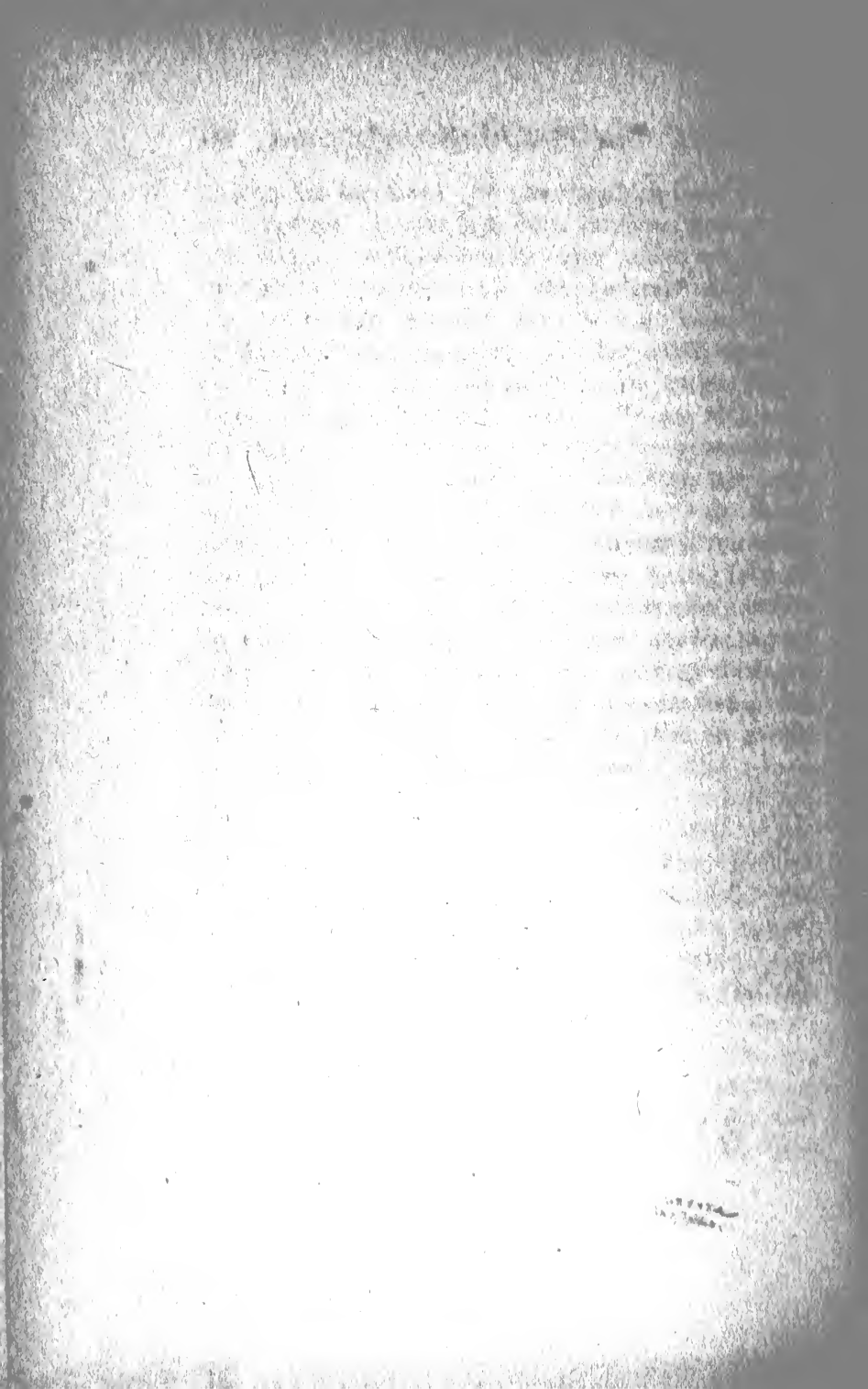
In February, 1898, Mary had been ill with tonsillitis, but I had heard that she was getting better when one morning in Boston I was called to the telephone. Her father, in New York, told me that Mary had died in the night. It was unbelievable. It seemed like an incredible calamity that a crea-

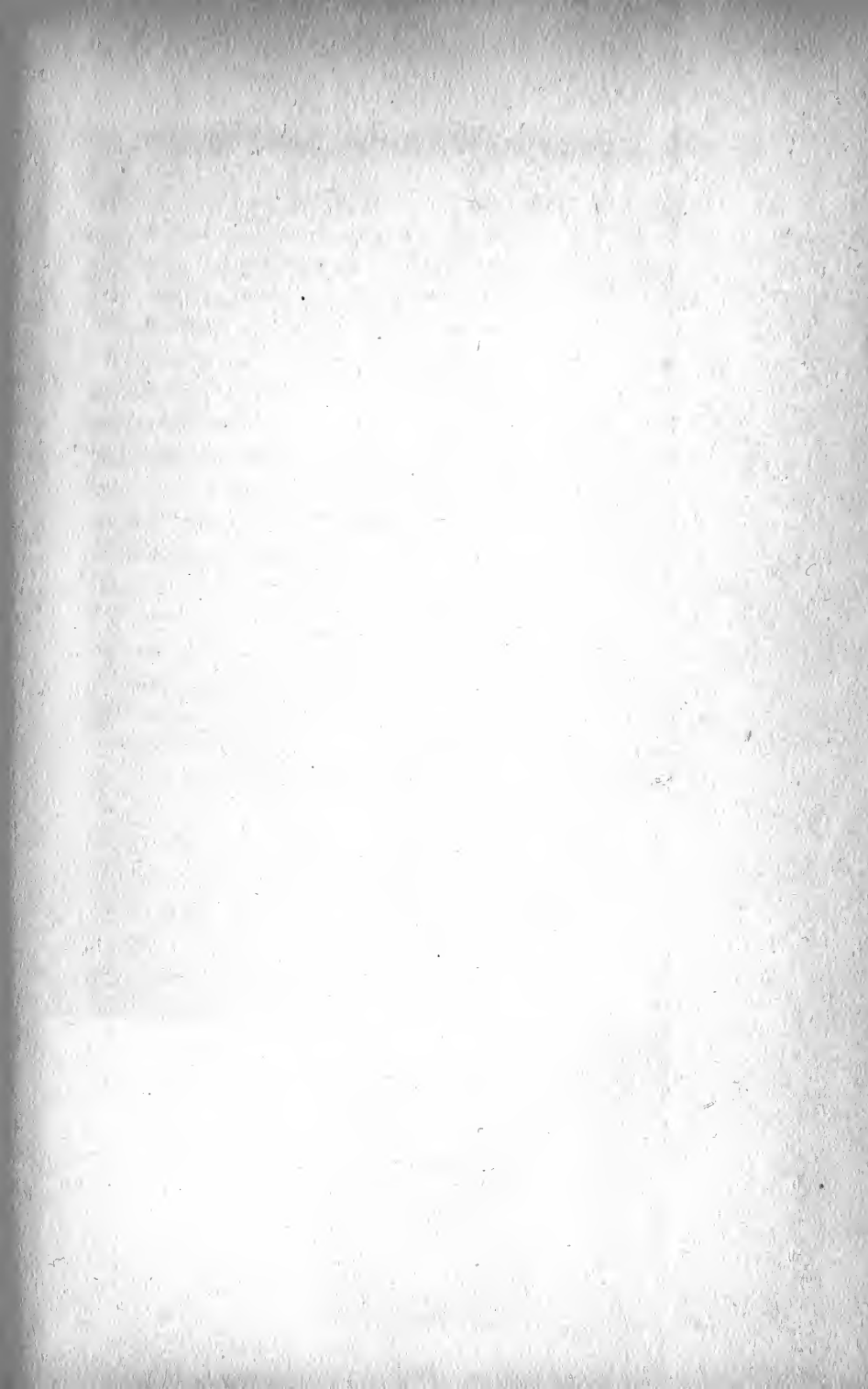
ture so full of vital force and the pure joy of life should slip away from us so quickly. For she was one of the most joyous of God's creatures, and yet one of the most serious. She was one of the few unforgettable persons who have the power of creating an ineffaceable impression even on a chance acquaintance; to us who loved her she was an adorable child, and the years which have passed since God took her have in no way dimmed her memory. Her body was taken to Amherst and laid to rest in the cemetery where later her father's was laid close by her. "Until the day dawn, and the shadows flee away."

Two years later, on December 9, 1899, we celebrated Cousin Abba's ninetieth birthday. Her friends and neighbors assembled to do her honor, and although she could no longer move about among her guests, she sat in her chair in the study gladly welcoming them and speaking, as always, the fitting word to each. She looked like a little queen, and, as it proved, was receiving her friends for the last time. Little more than a month later, when I was staying with Rebecca in New York, George came in one Sunday morning with a telegram, saying as he handed it to Rebecca: "I think this is the end." Mary Spalding, we knew, was visiting Cousin Abba, and the telegram was from her. There was nothing especially alarming in the message, but Mary would never have sent it except as a warning. Rebecca and I made ready to go to Amherst, and before we left a second telegram told

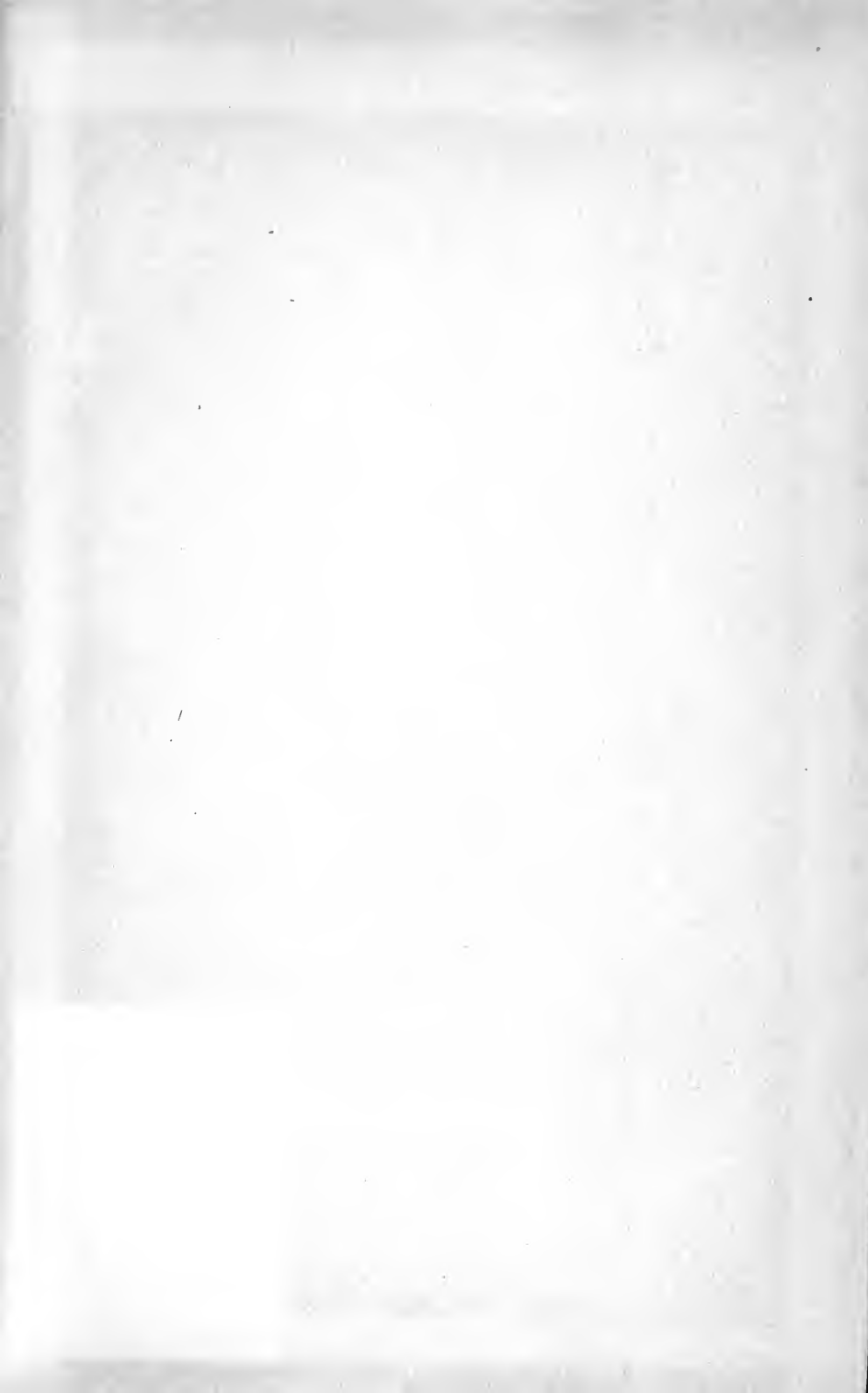
us that all was over. She had had no long illness or suffering. It was just that the time had come, and she had stepped over the line which separates this world from that which lies beyond. And who can doubt that she must have been at home there as she certainly was here? But her death was the end of an era. No more shall we live as she lived, or see things as she saw them. We are living in another world. She was the last of her generation; her brothers and cousins, who had been her intimate friends, had all preceded her to those Heavenly mansions. Even her darling grandchild had stepped in before her; and one would love to think that she was awaiting her grandmother at the door of one such mansion. But these are the things which are hidden from our sight, and all that we are given to know is that both of them being the children of God, loving and serving Him on earth, are somewhere happy in His presence.

the first of these was the fact that the United States was a young nation, and its people were full of energy and ambition. They were determined to build a great nation, and they were willing to sacrifice everything for it. This was the spirit of the American Revolution, and it was this spirit that made the United States what it is today. The second of these was the fact that the United States was a free nation, and its people were free to express their opinions and to follow their own paths. This was the spirit of the American Revolution, and it was this spirit that made the United States what it is today. The third of these was the fact that the United States was a united nation, and its people were united in their love of their country. This was the spirit of the American Revolution, and it was this spirit that made the United States what it is today. The fourth of these was the fact that the United States was a powerful nation, and its people were proud of their country. This was the spirit of the American Revolution, and it was this spirit that made the United States what it is today. The fifth of these was the fact that the United States was a nation of the future, and its people were looking forward to a bright future. This was the spirit of the American Revolution, and it was this spirit that made the United States what it is today.









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**AMHERST
AND OUR
FAMILY TREE**



ANNE M. MEANS

ATHERTON

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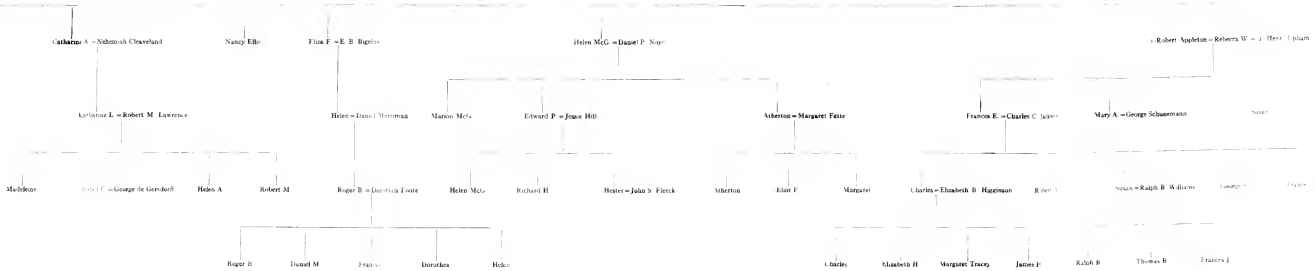
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Figure 1. The effect of the number of trials on the number of correct responses. The number of correct responses was significantly higher for the 10-trial condition than for the 5-trial condition. Error bars represent the standard error of the mean.



Elizabeth 13 = John Appleton

Mary M = John Adams

M. W. M. = Eliza C. Rockwell

(1) Henrietta Wheeler = John F. = (2) Adeline Miller

Mary E. = George Roper

Alfred I

James B. = Mary J. = John

Mary A.

John M.

David L. = Elizabeth Hopkins

Edith M. = Charles Palmer

Charles

Mary I.

John B. = Maude Dwyer

Alfred I.

Nancy F. = Charles H. Carter

John B.

John

Mary A. = Frank B. = John B.

Mary

Philip F. = Mary J. = John

James I.

William B. = Mary

John I. = Mary J. = John

James

William A.

John B. = Mary Matthews

Frank W. = William V. Rockwell

Elizabeth A.

George P.

Mary I.

Thomas I.

Joseph B.

John

Henry

John B.

John B.

John

John I. = Mary J. = John

John

John I.

MEANS—SECTION 1

12. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 93(443):1202-1211, 1998.

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Year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Population (millions)	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.4	2.7	3.0
GDP (billions of dollars)	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5
Life expectancy (years)	55	60	65	70	75	80	85

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References



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Age Group	Percentage of Respondents
18-24	95
25-34	85
35-44	75
45-54	65
55-64	55
65-74	45
75+	15

MEANS

Robert Means = Mary McGibbon

William Lawrence = Charles = (d) Anna M. Lyman

Frederick C. C. = Mary = (d) = (d)

John = Hester = (d)

John = L. = John = (d)

Charles = Augustus = (d)

Harriet = William = (d)

John M. = Clementine = (d)

Mary R. Brown

Stephen H. = Nora Leary

Robert M. = Ruth R. Hackett

Augustus = L. = (d)

Arthur L. = Jennette B. Barr

John = Mary = (d)

Elmer = Henry = (d)

Blanche L. = John Starkweather

Harriet = (d)

Charles = (d)

Clementine = John = (d)

Elizabeth = (d)

Hester

Mary B.

Robert M.

Peter

John

Arthur L.

John =

Mary =

Roland

Christopher

Anna

John

Charles

